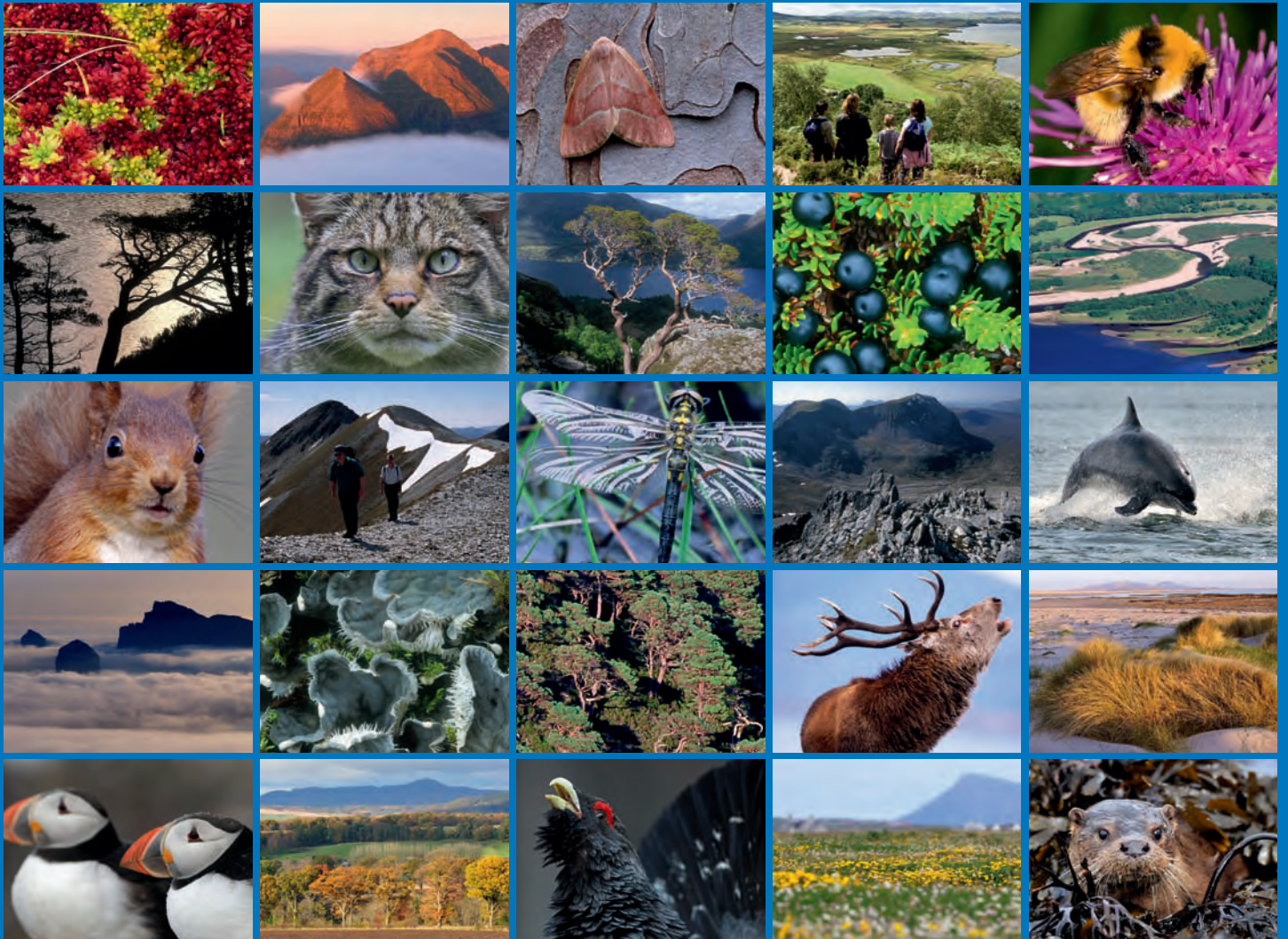


# Developing the network of longer distance routes





**Scottish Natural Heritage**  
All of nature for all of Scotland

# COMMISSIONED REPORT

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**Commissioned Report No. 380**

## **DEVELOPING THE NETWORK OF LONGER DISTANCE ROUTES**

(Tender No. 28776)

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## Key Definitions

Several terms used throughout this report are explained below to assist readers' comprehension of the report's contents.

**Active travel** – comprises travel on foot, cycle or horse, in the process of which individuals and communities may increase their levels of physical activity, fitness and health.

**Core paths** – the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003 introduced requirements for access authorities to prepare core path plans. Core paths identified in these plans are intended to give the public reasonable access throughout an area, on foot, cycle or horseback, on rights of way or other paths, footways, footpaths, cycle tracks, or other means of access on land, or on water.

**Cycle, riding and canoe routes** – while the access legislation enables walking, cycling, riding and non-motorised watersports, wherever such activities can be enjoyed responsibly, some routes may be designed for, and marketed for use by, specific activity groups – e.g. cycleways, riding routes and canoe routes. Canoe routes may be used for a range of paddlesports, including kayaking, rafting, rowing and other non-motorised watersports.

**Epic journeys** – these are longer distance trips, by those who wish the challenge of navigation and self-reliance, often in 'wild country', and mostly on self-selected or virtual routes.

**Heritage paths** – these are historic trods, paths, tracks or roads, which have been used for a specific purpose and/or by particular groups of people – e.g. Roman roads, drove roads, pilgrimage routes and miners' paths.

**Link routes** – for the purposes of this report, these are routes of under 32 km in length, which may offer potential links to, or between, longer distance routes (see further explanation in s. 3.1).

**Long distance routes** – the Countryside (Scotland) Act 1967 provides for the designation of long distance routes, on which the public can make extensive journeys on foot, cycle, or horse and which are wholly, or mostly, off-road. Arrangements are in place for the management and marketing of these routes by the respective access authorities.

**Longer distance routes** – a variety of other recreational and/or multi-functional routes, which are off-road, or on quieter roads and tracks, have been developed and are being managed and promoted by public, voluntary and other organisations – operating individually or in management partnerships. Criteria for selecting longer distance routes during this research are set out in section 1.3.4. A minimum length of 32 km was selected, as longer distance routes are intended to cater for multi-day trips, as well as being available for shorter journeys.

**NCN routes** – the National Cycle Network (NCN) promotes cycling and other forms of active travel for everyday trips, recreation and tourism. The Network comprises off-road cycle paths and sections on quieter roads, cycle lanes, etc..

**Themed routes** – these are recognised and managed routes, with a unique identity and 'story', based on a specific topic, which helps to unify the planning, interpretation and marketing of the trail (e.g. Cateran Trail). The theme may be based on a specific aspect; for example, the landscape, wildlife, social history or literary associations of the area through which the route passes.

**Virtual routes** – for the purposes of this study, these are routes which are promoted in guidebooks, websites or other media, but are not officially recognised, signed or managed, although sections of these routes may include designated or other longer distance routes. Examples include the Cape Wrath Trail, Famous Highland Drove Walk and Scottish Sea Kayak Trail.



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# COMMISSIONED REPORT

# Summary

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## DEVELOPING THE NETWORK OF LONGER DISTANCE ROUTES

**Commissioned Report No. 380 (Tender No. 28776)**

**Contractor: Peter Scott Planning Services**

**Year of publication: 2010**

### Background

A diverse range of longer distance routes<sup>1</sup> has been developed throughout much of Scotland since the West Highland Way was opened in 1980. These routes provide valuable opportunities for recreation, tourism and active travel, attract significant use by walkers, cyclists, horse riders and disabled users, and help to achieve a range of public policy outcomes. Longer distance routes have been established incrementally and there is a lack of a coherent and continuous network of routes, a comprehensive database of routes and integrated approaches to their marketing.

This report –

- provides the first ever audit of designated and other longer distance routes in Scotland
- identifies opportunities for extending, enhancing and strengthening the network of routes
- provides recommendations for the future development, management and marketing of the network of longer distance routes.

### Main Findings and Recommendations

The audit of Scotland's longer distance routes provides information on –

- the four designated long distance routes – the Southern Upland Way, West Highland Way, Speyside Way and Great Glen Way (total length: 744 km), and the Scottish section of the Pennine Way National Trail (11 km)
- 29 other longer distance routes (i.e. routes of 32+ km; 2,797 km) – such as the Border Abbeys Way, River Ayr Way, Clyde to Forth Cycle Route, Rob Roy Way, Fife Coastal Path and the Gordon Way
- eight longer distance routes at an advanced stage of planning or development (678 km) – including the Carrick Way, Three Lochs Trail and Great Glen Canoe Trail.

In addition, it identifies –

- 90 other routes (<32 km) – which may offer opportunities to fill strategic gaps in the network of longer distance routes or extend specific routes. Examples include the John Buchan Way, Strathkelvin Railway Path, Cauldstone Slap and the Isla Way
- six examples of 'virtual routes' (i.e. guidebook or website routes) – including the Famous Highland Drove Walk, Sutherland Trail and Scottish Sea Kayak Trail.

The audit includes longer, mostly off-road, cycle routes and recognises the National Cycle Network as providing a complementary network of routes for recreation and active travel.

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<sup>1</sup> For the purposes of this report, *longer distance routes* include designated long distance routes and other routes of 32+ km, which are signed, maintained and promoted to some extent.

Longer distance routes vary widely in their extent, the uses they support, and the quality of signing, surfaces and information, etc.. Many provide a high quality user experience and are well managed and marketed, but sections of some have barriers or surfaces that cannot sustain multi-use and some are not effectively maintained or promoted.

Recommendations include –

- adopting more integrated and collaborative approaches to the planning, management and marketing of the longer distance route network and wider path networks
- extending the range of uses which longer distance routes can sustain
- developing strategic cross-country and round-the-coast routes, based on existing longer distance routes and potential link routes (e.g. Border/Solway to Glasgow, Fife/Forth to Glasgow/the Clyde/Loch Lomond, continuous coast path from Berwick to Inverness)
- creating and promoting circular longer distance trails, based on existing routes (e.g. Loch Lomond and Pearls of the Clyde Trail, Moray Country and Coast Trail)
- developing and promoting further longer distance routes, including –
  - priority sections of a Scottish Coastal Way
  - one or more coast-to-coast cycle route(s)
  - the Great Scottish Ride and linked riding/mountain biking routes
  - the Great Glen Canoe Trail (in development) and canoe trails on the Forth-Clyde/ Union Canals, Loch Lomond and the River Tweed
  - the St. Andrew's Way/Cycleway – a pilgrims route from Edinburgh to St. Andrews, and the Queens Highway – a history-themed route from Scone to Stirling
- enhancing the route network and user experience through –
  - strengthening the themeing and interpretation of routes
  - 'greening' route corridors
  - promoting the use of public transport to/from routes
  - developing a brand and marketing programme for the longer distance routes network
  - establishing a quality assurance scheme
  - developing and maintaining a collective website for the route network
  - ensuring readily-accessible and up-to-date websites/webpages for each route
- developing a national database of longer distance routes, core paths and other routes
- establishing a Longer Distance Routes Forum to provide a strategic overview, guidance and support for the planning, management and marketing of the network
- identifying a Longer Distance Routes Coordinator to progress the above recommendations; particularly 'quick win' actions (e.g. longer distance routes strategy, website and database, and progressing longer distance circular trails, a coast-coast cycle route(s), Scottish Coastal Way, Great Scottish Ride and canoe trails)
- encouraging the setting up of partnership-based Management Groups for each route
- encouraging the Scottish Government to establish a Challenge Fund to support the implementation of the recommendations
- encouraging route management organisations to review and enhance arrangements for involving and seeking support from stakeholders in developing, maintaining and marketing longer distance routes.

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<b>1. INTRODUCTION</b>	
1.1 Background	1
1.2 Objectives and methodology	1
1.3 Focus on longer distance routes	2
1.4 Acknowledgements	3
<b>2. CONTEXT FOR LONGER DISTANCE ROUTES</b>	
2.1 Brief review of the context for long distance routes	5
2.2 Long distance route designation and policies	5
2.3 Contribution of longer distance routes to national policies and policy outcomes	6
2.4 Overview of user markets and market trends	7
<b>3. AUDIT OF LONGER DISTANCE ROUTES AND POTENTIAL LINK ROUTES</b>	
3.1 Audit intentions, scope and sources	13
3.2 Presentation of the audit data	14
3.3 The longer distance routes network – overview	14
3.4 Audit information on the designated long distance routes and Pennine Way	15
3.5 Audit information on the other longer distance routes	25
3.6 Audit information on routes at an advanced stage of development or planning	29
3.7 Audit information on virtual routes	29
3.8 Potential link routes	30
<b>4. ASSESSMENT OF THE ROUTE NETWORK</b>	
4.1 Overview assessment of longer distance routes	43
<b>5. STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS FOR THE LONGER DISTANCE ROUTE NETWORK</b>	
5.1 Background	47
5.2 Adopting a network-based approach to paths and routes planning, development and promotion	47
5.3 Agreeing a vision for the longer distance routes network	50
5.4 Clarifying and agreeing the principal markets for longer distance routes	50
<b>6. STRENGTHENING AND ENHANCING THE LONGER DISTANCE ROUTE NETWORK AND INDIVIDUAL ROUTES</b>	
6.1 Developing recommendations for the longer distance route network	53
6.2 Maximising the range of user opportunities on existing routes	53
6.3 Making strategic connections in the network of longer distance routes	54
6.4 Establishing and promoting longer distance circular routes	68
6.5 A Scottish Coastal Way	71
6.6 Longer distance riding routes	74
6.7 Canoe trails	80
6.8 Themed routes	82
6.9 ‘Greening’ of longer distance route corridors	84
6.10 Promoting the use of public transport services by longer distance route users	85
<b>7. FRAMEWORK FOR COLLABORATIVE ACTION ON LONGER DISTANCE ROUTES</b>	
7.1 Towards a framework for joint action on longer distance routes	87
7.2 Brand development and joint marketing of the longer distance routes network	87
7.3 National paths and routes database	88
7.4 Minimum standards and quality assurance scheme	88
7.5 A national framework for planning, managing and marketing the longer distance route network	90
7.6 Longer distance routes coordinator and ‘quick win’ actions	91
7.7 Funding and other support for the longer distance route network	92
7.8 Action programme	94

References	97
Appendix A. Consultees	99
Appendix B. Assessments of Potential Strategic Cross-Country Routes	101
Appendix C. Criteria for Successful Longer Distance Routes	107

<b>List of Figures</b>	<b>Page</b>
Figure 2.1 Drivers of potential growth in use of longer distance routes	11
Figure 4.1 Identifying priorities for longer distance routes from the audit and assessments	45
Figure 5.1 Key components of the Scottish paths and routes network	47
Figure 5.2 The longer distance routes network	49
Figure 7.1 Suggested strategic partnership structure for the longer distance route network	91

<b>List of Tables</b>	<b>Page</b>
Table 2.1 Longer distance routes: legislative and policy framework	7
Table 2.2 Illustrative walking holiday and short break market sectors	8
Table 3.1 Longer distance routes in Scotland	15
Table 3.2 Designated longer distance routes: user types, levels and expenditures	16
Table 3.3 Longer distance routes in Scotland: summary	17
Table 3.4 Other longer distance routes – locations and lengths	26
Table 3.5 Summary of potential link routes	33
Table 4.1 Longer distance routes: summary of strengths and weaknesses	43
Table 4.2 Longer distance routes: summary of opportunities and threats	44
Table 5.1 Longer distance route market sectors and priorities	51
Table 6.1 Existing strategic cross-Scotland or around-Scotland routes research	54
Table 6.2 Assessment of potential opportunities for strategic cross-Scotland or around-Scotland routes	58
Table 6.3 Assessment and recommendations for completing missing links in the strategic longer distance route network	60
Table 6.4 Central Scotland strategic routes: current routes and ‘corridors for search’	62
Table 6.5 Recommended circular trails	68
Table 6.6 Potential circular trails for longer-term consideration	69
Table 6.7 Suggested Great Scottish Ride – illustrative route, options and extensions	77
Table 6.8 Potential ‘epic ride’ extensions to suggested Great Scottish Ride	77
Table 6.9 Potential Heart of Scotland and Moray Country and Coast Circular Rides	78
Table 6.10 Potential canoe trails – summary assessment	81
Table 7.1 Suggested topics to include in minimum standards for longer distance routes	89
Table 7.2 Illustration of a potential grading scheme for longer distance routes	89
Table 7.3 Potential funding for longer distance route programmes	93
Table 7.4 Longer distance route network: action programme	95

<b>List of Maps</b>	<b>Page</b>
Map Ai. Longer Distance Routes: North Scotland	22
Map Aii. Longer Distance Routes: Central and South Scotland	23
Map Bi. Longer Distance Routes and Potential Link Routes: North Scotland	40
Map Bii. Longer Distance Routes and Potential Link Routes: Central and South Scotland	41
Map C. Strategic Cross-Scotland and Around-Scotland Routes	58
Map D. Central Scotland strategic routes; current routes and ‘corridors for search’	65
Map E. Potential Longer Distance Circular Trails	70
Map F. Coastal Routes: Current and Priority Future Routes	73
Map G. Proposed Long Distance Horse Riding Routes	79

Text Box 7.1 Northern Ireland’s activity websites and Quality Walks scheme	90
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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Background**

- 1.1.1 This report identifies and assesses the current provision of longer distance routes throughout Scotland and provides recommendations for the further development and promotion of the network of these routes. The research was commissioned by Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) and undertaken in consultation with representatives of relevant national agencies, local authorities and recreational and access interest groups.
- 1.1.2 In commissioning this research, SNH has recognised the incremental development of a diverse range of longer distance routes, since the opening of the West Highland Way, the first designated Long Distance Route, in 1980, but the lack of a coherent network of longer distance routes, integrated approaches to their marketing, or a comprehensive database of these routes. The research is of particular relevance given the current growth in proposals for new routes and the declining resources available across the public sector.
- 1.1.3 This research builds on other research on long distance routes (Wood-Gee, 2008) and provides strategic recommendations intended to contribute to SNH's and its partners' policies and practice in respect of the future development, management and marketing of Scotland's longer distance routes. In particular, the information and recommendations in this report will assist SNH to further develop the longer distance routes components of its policies in *Paths – linking people, places and nature* (SNH, 2010).

### **1.2 Objectives and methodology**

- 1.2.1 Key objectives of this research included –
- a. providing an initial inventory and assessment of designated and other longer distance routes
  - b. identifying gaps in the network of longer distance routes – taking account of characteristics such as geographical location, types of users, users' experience and themes for the interpretation of routes
  - c. identifying opportunities and providing recommendations for the further development, management and promotion of longer distance routes.
- 1.2.2 The research was undertaken as a desk study and comprised -
- a. sourcing and collating data on longer distance routes and other routes, including -
    - collecting information on route lengths, key locations, link routes, management responsibilities, users, route marketing, etc. - from previous studies, leaflets, guidebooks, magazine articles, websites, core path plans and similar sources
    - verifying the data and collecting additional information - through e-mail requests to access authorities' staff and information requests or interviews with representatives of Scotways, Sustrans, Forestry Commission Scotland and similar organisations
  - b. a questionnaire survey of access authorities - to seek information on current and proposed longer distance routes, potential link routes, gaps in routes, key issues relating to the provision and management of routes in each authority's area, and suggestions or aspirations for new routes
  - c. consultations with interest groups – including representatives of walkers, cyclists, horse riders, canoeists and wider sports, tourism and access interests, such as sportscotland, VisitScotland and Scotways



- d. mapping current longer distance routes, routes at an advanced stage of planning or development, and potential link routes
- e. assessing the above information to identify strategic gaps in the longer distance route network and opportunities to enhance routes and their promotion
- f. developing recommendations for strengthening the network of routes on the ground and the framework within which this network is planned, developed managed and marketed at the national and local scales.

1.2.3 This research comprises the first substantial collection of data on all of Scotland's longer distance routes and much of the required data proved difficult to source, was partial, or was not readily available. Hence, the information in this report is not fully comprehensive. Issues of the extent and quality of data on longer distance routes and other paths have highlighted the need for a Scotland-wide paths and routes database, as discussed later in this report (s. 7.3).

### 1.3 Focus on longer distance routes

1.3.1 This study focuses on the current provision of longer distance routes and the future enhancement and promotion of the network of such routes. The brief did not seek detailed assessments of user markets or market trends, specific route proposals 'on the ground', or current route management and marketing arrangements.

1.3.2 The Countryside (Scotland) Act 1967 provided for the designation of **long distance routes**, on which ... *the public should be enabled to make extensive journeys on foot, by pedal cycles, or on horseback*. However, the development of long distance routes initially focussed on provision for long distance walkers - often due to physical constraints, or resistance by landowners to other types of users.

1.3.3 Over more recent decades, a wider range of 'official' and 'unofficial' **longer distance routes** has been developed, including walking, cycling, riding and multi-use routes. Amongst the 'drivers' for multi-use and multi-functional routes (i.e. routes catering for journeys to work, school, etc. and recreational and tourism trips) have been –

- more strategic approaches to access planning by local and national park authorities (e.g. outdoor access plans, core path plans)
- initiatives by greenspace and countryside trusts and other partnerships
- community-based economic and tourism initiatives
- increasing demands for activity tourism and off-road cycling and riding provision
- development of the National Cycle Network
- enhanced access rights provided by the Land Reform legislation.

1.3.4 In recognition of the diverse nature of demand for, and provision of, longer distance routes, the *longer distance routes* referred to within this report encompass routes which -

- a. enable recreational and other active travel –
  - on land - by walkers and/or cyclists, horse riders and disabled users
  - on water - by canoeists and other non-powered water users (e.g. rafters)
- b. enable trips of over one day's duration – with 32 km (20 miles) being adopted as the minimum length of longer distance routes for the purposes of this study
- c. have defined start and finish points
- d. are appropriately signed and waymarked
- e. have website and/or other published information (e.g. leaflets, guidebooks)
- f. are largely off-road - with suitable road and rail crossings, where required

- g. are monitored and maintained in a condition which is fit for purpose
- h. are suitable for use by those with moderate levels of navigation and outdoor skills and avoid long sections of travel through more remote and potentially hazardous 'wild country', with no or few 'escape routes'
- i. offer opportunities to appreciate the landscapes, natural and social history and cultural associations of the areas through which they pass
- j. offer at least a basic range of visitor services (e.g. accommodation, places to eat) at key locations.

1.3.5 A degree of flexibility has been adopted in applying the above criteria for longer distance routes, in recognition of the stage of development and local circumstances of some current and proposed routes. However, the adoption of these criteria has ruled out the consideration of routes which are –

- a. primarily 'website routes' and are not waymarked or maintained on the ground – for example, the Skye Way and Roman Heritage Way
- b. cycle routes which are mostly on-road – such as the Tweed Cycle Way and Four Abbeys Cycle Way
- c. routes promoted by walking holiday operators, or other commercial interests, solely for the benefit of their clients
- d. routes which are largely through remote and/or potentially hazardous countryside, where route construction, waymarking and promotion may detract from the sense of challenge and isolation sought by those seeking a 'wild country' experience, and where substantial navigation and outdoor experience may be required – for example, the Cape Wrath Trail and Highland High Way.

1.3.6 In addition to longer distance routes, a substantial number of **potential link routes** were identified to assist in assessing opportunities to fill gaps in, or to extend, current longer distance routes, or the wider routes network. These link routes fulfil many of the criteria for longer distance routes, but are significantly shorter in length.

## 1.4 Acknowledgements

1.4.1 Representatives of a wide range of organisations provided valuable information, assistance and advice during the preparation of this report (Appendix A). The contributions of these individuals and their organisations, and the support of SNH staff, are acknowledged with gratitude.



## **2. CONTEXT FOR LONGER DISTANCE ROUTES**

### **2.1 Brief review of the context for long distance routes**

2.1.1 This section highlights some key background information on Scotland's longer distance routes and their user markets. It is not intended as a comprehensive contextual review, as more detailed information is available in other reports and policy papers (e.g. Wood-Gee, 2008; SNH, 1997). Rather this section –

- provides an introduction to the designated long distance routes and policies of relevance to these
- indicates how designated and other longer distance routes can contribute to national policy objectives and benefit Scotland's communities, economy and environment
- provides a brief overview of walking and cycling markets, including the principal user markets for longer distance routes and the types of facilities these users require. Information on horse riding and canoeing markets is less readily available and these markets are discussed in relation to the development of riding routes and canoe trails in section 6 of this report.

### **2.2 Long distance route designation and policies**

2.2.1 Four long distance routes (LDRs) have been designated in accordance with the provisions of the Countryside (Scotland) Act 1967 –

- West Highland Way – from Milngavie to Fort William (152 km, opened in 1980)
- Speyside Way – from Buckie to Aviemore (135 km, first section opened in 1981), with its extension to Newtonmore intended for completion by 2011
- Southern Upland Way – from Cockburnspath to Portpatrick (340 km, opened in 1984)
- Great Glen Way – from Fort William to Inverness (117 km, opened in 2002).

2.2.2 The Pennine Way is England's longest national trail and is the responsibility of Natural England. The final 11 km section of the Pennine Way lies within the Scottish Borders and the official status of this section has been confirmed under the provisions of the Countryside (Scotland) Act. More detailed information on the LDRs is provided in section 3.4.

2.2.3 SNH's 1997 Policy Paper on *Long-Distance Routes in Scotland* set out *national objectives* for the designated LDRs. These were to -

- *provide opportunities for people to undertake extensive recreational journeys, mostly away from roads used by vehicles, along well-defined and continuous routes*
- *provide recreational opportunities of national significance and quality which provide people with a rich, varied and satisfying experience based on the natural heritage and other features of the areas through which they pass*
- *provide recreational opportunities that are managed sensitively in relation to the needs of land management, local communities and the natural heritage*
- *provide recreational opportunities that are capable of cost-effective and efficient management*
- *generate economic and social benefits to the areas and communities through which they pass.*

#### 2.2.4 The Policy Paper on *Long-Distance Routes in Scotland* –

- recognised a lack of clear objectives for the designated LDRs, but emphasised that the concept of a long distance journey was valid, especially given the popularity of such routes in other countries and growth in walking tourism markets
- identified the completion of the Great Glen Way as the main priority, at that time
- considered that there was insufficient demand and resources for a more extensive network of designated LDRs, but indicated that SNH might be prepared to consider proposals for specific new routes
- recognised that day trips on LDRs are much greater than their use by long distance walkers
- supported the further development of regional and other longer routes (e.g. Clyde Walkway, NCN cycle routes), the protection of longer distance rights of way, and the linking of longer distance routes to local paths and paths networks
- considered options for future long distance route management and concluded that the respective local authorities should continue to manage the LDRs, with SNH taking a lead role
- emphasised that LDR monitoring and marketing should be strengthened.

#### 2.2.5 SNH's more recent *Paths - linking people, places and nature* (2010) –

- reiterated the importance of the designated LDRs as part of wider path networks and recognised the need for a more coherent network of such routes
- indicated that SNH will continue to encourage improvements to the LDRs, including provision for multi-use on these routes
- confirmed that SNH will not designate further LDRs under the statutory procedures, but will encourage more local partnership-based initiatives
- recognised the need for enhanced investment in the further development and on-going maintenance of LDRs and other paths.

2.2.6 While not immune to funding and maintenance issues, the designated LDRs can be considered as the 'jewels in the crown' of Scotland's longer distance paths. They are each managed in accordance with a rolling Development and Management Programme, each has a coordinator/manager and rangers/maintenance wardens, and all four are managed to common standards, which have been developed and are overseen by the Long Distance Routes Forum. This Forum is coordinated by SNH and comprises representatives of the management authorities for the designated LDRs and the Pennine Way.

### **2.3 Contribution of longer distance routes to national policies and policy outcomes**

2.3.1 The effective provision, management and marketing of the designated LDRs and other longer distance routes, and their active use by local residents or visitors, can contribute to the 'delivery' of a wide range of national legislation, strategies and policies (Table 2.1). In particular, they can help to achieve many of the policy outcomes relating to the Scottish Government's strategic objectives of ... *creating a wealthier, fairer, healthier, safer and stronger, smarter and greener Scotland*.

*Table 2.1 Longer distance routes: legislative and policy framework (illustrative examples)*

The Government's Programme for Scotland 2009-2010	Countryside (Scotland) Act 1967
Second National Planning Framework	Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003
National Transport Strategy	Transport (Scotland) Act 2005
Strategy for Physical Activity	Disability Discrimination Act 2005
Sustainable Development Strategy	Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009
Scottish Rural Development Plan	SPP17 & PAN75. Planning for Transport
Scottish Forestry Strategy	SPP11. Open Space and Physical Activity
Cycle Action Plan for Scotland	NPPG14. Natural Heritage
Towards a Cycle Tourism Strategy for Scotland	Regional transport strategies
Scottish Tourism: The Next Decade - A Framework for Change	Structure plans
Enjoying the Outdoors: Supporting Participation and Sharing the Benefits (SNH)	Core path plans
Paths – linking people, places and nature (SNH)	

2.3.2 Longer distance route programmes and investment can help to achieve a wide range benefits and policy outcomes, including –

**a. community benefits**, through -

- increasing participation in walking, cycling, horse riding and paddlesports
- promoting active travel - available to all and at no/low cost
- enhancing fitness, health, well-being and quality of life
- providing assured access on well-managed routes - thereby, promoting users' interest in, and confidence during, longer trips
- enhancing safety – by providing off-road routes and safety messages
- enhancing connections between local communities throughout Scotland
- improving integration between walking/cycling networks and public transport
- encouraging community involvement and empowerment – for example, through volunteer programmes

**b. economic benefits**, through:

- enhancing the 'visitor offer' and increasing competitiveness in visitor markets
- increasing visits and visitors' expenditures – including out-of-season
- supporting and growing local businesses and sustaining local services
- providing employment and training opportunities
- 'showcasing' local produce, crafts and other products
- managing access and, thereby, benefiting farmers and other land managers
- maximising value for money through partnership paths programmes and marketing
- maximising the use and benefits of existing paths and path networks.

**c. environmental and cultural benefits**, by:

- contributing to green networks
- reducing greenhouse gas emissions - through promoting active travel and less reliance on private transport for tourism, leisure and functional trips
- 'channelling' activities and events onto sustainable routes
- promoting responsible access and the 'leave no trace' ethic
- providing interpretation and life-long learning opportunities.

## 2.4 Overview of user markets and market trends

2.4.1 This section briefly highlights some key aspects of the scale, characteristics and expenditures of walking and cycling holiday, short break and day visitor markets, the types of routes and facilities required by these users, and influences for change on these markets. Horse riders and canoeists are also important current and potential markets for longer distance routes and these markets and their needs are discussed in relation to riding routes and canoe trails in section 6.



2.4.2 While this report focuses on the recreational and tourism use of longer distance routes, it is recognised that sections of these routes provide vital resources for –

- journeys to work, school, shops, leisure centres, etc.
- everyday recreation from home
- exercise, health and well-being
- training for sport (e.g. running, cycling).

In addition, the provision of accessible routes within easy reach of where people live or spend leisure time (e.g. urban greenspaces, country parks) can encourage people to develop interest and experience in walking, cycling, riding or paddlesports and proceed to explore the wider countryside as their fitness and confidence develops.

#### *Walking holidays and short breaks in Scotland*

2.4.3 Walking is one of the most popular outdoor pursuits undertaken by UK and overseas visitors in Scotland. The UK Tourism Survey (UKTS) indicates that walking featured as the main activity, or one of several activities, during almost 4.9m holiday trips/year in Scotland over the period 2006-08. While walks of up to 2 miles were the most popular, longer walks/hikes were taken on almost 1.97m visits/year and these walkers spent around £549m/year. VisitScotland has forecast that walking holidays are increasing and has estimated that, by 2015, walking tourism may contribute up to 22% of Scotland's revenue from UK tourists (Greenwood & Yeoman, 2006).

2.4.4 *Investigating and enhancing the walking experience in Scotland* (Progressive, 2006) reported on a survey of 990 UK and overseas visitors on walking holidays and short breaks in Scotland. The survey led to the identification of five walking holiday market sectors (Table 2.2), the characteristics of these sectors, and the types of walks which are likely to appeal to each sector. This Table illustrates that a diverse network of longer distance routes throughout much of Scotland could appeal to most walking and other activity visitors, other than *Committed Explorers*, who tend to be highly independent and do not seek well signed and managed walks or rides..

Table 2.2 Illustrative walking holiday and short break market sectors

<b>Walking visitors</b> % of respondents; estimated % of walks	<b>Characteristics of walkers</b>	<b>Characteristics of walks</b>
<b><i>Committed Explorers</i></b> (23%; 29%)	Younger ages, singles, males Skilled, serious walkers Seek challenging walks Walking is main activity	Challenging, adventurous walks Remoter areas (e.g. Highland mountains) Accommodation in campsites, bothies, etc. Minimal human influence on walk (e.g. signs)
<b><i>Part-time Explorers</i></b> (18%; 15%)	Younger ages, singles Skilled, serious walkers Seek challenging walks Enjoy other activities	Challenging, more remote walks Availability of pubs, restaurants, events Minimal human influence on walk, but some initial signage (e.g. time, distance)
<b><i>Committed Wanderers</i></b> (7%; 9%)	More mature age groups, married, both sexes and all economic groups Seek moderate walks Walking is main activity	Less challenging and less remote walks Moderate distance walks Facility provision (e.g. parking, toilets) Well-maintained routes Walks information + interpretation
<b><i>Part-time Wanderers</i></b> (33%; 29%)	Families, mature females, less affluent groups Seek moderate walks Enjoy other activities	Less challenging and less remote walks Moderate distance walks (e.g. rambles) Facilities (e.g. parking, toilets, B&Bs, hotels) Well-maintained routes Clear signs, walks information, interpretation
<b><i>Mixed</i></b> (19%; 18%)	More singles, but both sexes and all ages and economic groups Seek mix of walk types Walking as main activity, or enjoy other activities	All types of walk and associated facilities and information

Source: *Investigating and enhancing the walking experience in Scotland*, Progressive, Edinburgh, 2006

2.4.5 The above survey showed also that –

- most walkers were in the 35-55 age groups, but, with demographic change, those most likely to take walking holidays in the future are in the 45-65 age groups
- Scotland's walking experience was considered to be excellent – largely due to the scenery, natural environment, diverse walking products, quality of walks and infrastructure, and contributions of Scotland's culture, history and people to the experience
- there is a need to protect the diversity of walking products – ranging from challenging walking in remoter countryside to more 'comfortable' walking on well-maintained and signed paths, with associated visitor facilities
- the walking experience can be strengthened through better information, more walker-oriented accommodation, and enhanced transport services to/from walks
- key sources of information for walking visitors are the Internet, maps, guidebooks, TICs, previous visits and recommendations. Scottish residents tend to rely on local and personal knowledge.

#### *Walking day visits*

2.4.6 Walking was the main activity during around 77% of the 336.7m part-/day visits to the outdoors in 2007 (TNS, 2009). Most part-/day walks are over a short distance, with around half of all main activity walking visits comprising a walk of 2 to 8 miles and only 1% involving a walk of over 8 miles. Participation in longer day walks remained fairly constant from 2004 to 2007, while walks of under 2 miles increased in volume – possibly reflecting greater awareness of local paths and more confidence in using the outdoors around people's homes.

2.4.7 The importance of paths, path networks, signing and waymarking is illustrated by 74% of outdoor visits in 2007 involving the use of a path or path network, including 49% of all visits which were on signposted and/or waymarked paths (TNS, 2009). *Walking in the countryside in Scotland* (System Three Scotland, 1996) identified priorities for improving footpaths. These included –

- more/better signposting
- better footpath surfaces
- routes to suit different abilities
- more provision for cyclists
- more circular walks
- better links with public transport
- more/better walks leaflets.

2.4.8 Research for Natural England on *The Market for Strategic Recreational Routes* (TNS, 2007) focused on routes which are named, enable multi-day or short trips, and are promoted to visitors and local people. It found that almost one-quarter (23%) of England's adults rated strategic recreational routes as *very important places to visit* locally (18%), on a day visit to another area (13%), or on a holiday or short break (14%). 38% of adults had walked, cycled or ridden a horse on such routes in the last 12 months.

2.4.9 Principal reasons given for using a strategic recreational route were that these routes were *away from traffic* (49%), *close to where I live* (34%) and *to enjoy more attractive scenery* (34%). Other reasons included opportunities for circular trips and the suitability of such routes to users' abilities. Facilities which might increase the use of such routes by current users and non-users included more parking, more printed information and signing, more circular routes, and more routes connecting interesting places to visit.

### *Cycling holidays and short breaks in Scotland*

- 2.4.10 Around 284,000 holidays or short breaks in Scotland (2006-08 average data) included cycling, with 134,000 trips (47%) comprising *mountain biking* and 168,000 trips (59%) comprising *other types of cycling*<sup>2</sup>. These cycling visitors spent over £73m/year in Scotland. The data do not show what lengths of cycle rides or types of routes were used and many mountain biking trips may have been at mountain bike centres and other cycle trips may have been largely on-road.
- 2.4.11 Lumsdon (1996) identified some of the principal *likes* and *dislikes* of cycle tourists. Amongst the *likes* were – scenic countryside, traffic-free routes, waymarked routes, and refreshments stops. *Dislikes* included hills and muddy, rough surfaces.

### *Cycling day visits*

- 2.4.12 In 2006-08, cycling/mountain biking was undertaken on 6% of all outdoor recreation part-/day visits involving an activity and was the main activity on 4% of such trips. Around half of all cycle visits were off-road.
- 2.4.13 Consultations for the Draft *Cycling Action Plan for Scotland* and respondents to the *Scottish Opinion Survey* (Scottish Executive, 2005) have cited the need for more off-road cycle paths, cycle tracks and shared-use paths to encourage people to cycle more. Better information on cycle routes also featured strongly amongst the responses.
- 2.4.14 Research for Forestry Commission Scotland (Tourism Resources Company, 2005) has recognised a need to fill a ‘product gap’ for off-road cycling facilities at strategic locations, particularly in the West of Scotland, and aimed at both local residents and tourists – especially novices, families and older cyclists, including signed routes of varying lengths with good views, etc..

### *Drivers for growth and key trends in longer distance trail markets*

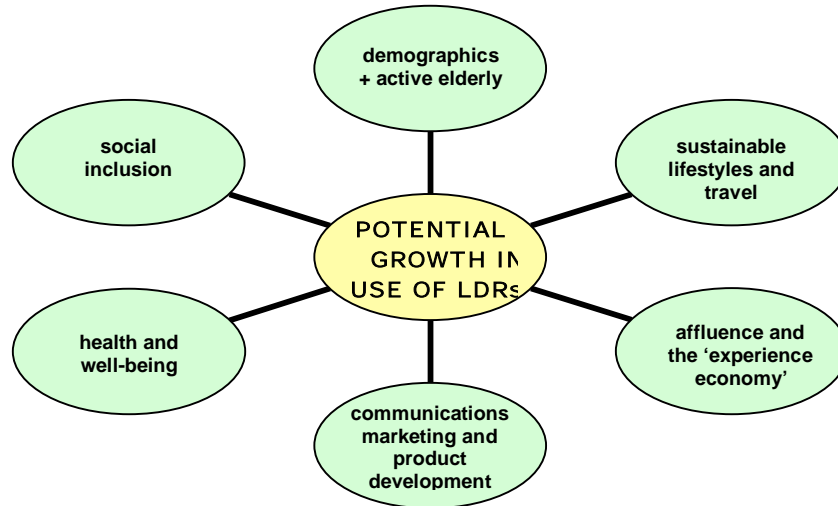
- 2.4.15 Figure 2.1 illustrates some of the main factors likely to influence the growth of longer distance routes user markets. These include –
- demographics and the active elderly - the growing proportion of over-55 year olds in the Scottish and UK populations; many of whom have moderate or high disposable incomes and/or leisure time and enjoy active lifestyles
  - sustainable lifestyles and travel – people are increasingly seeking, and being encouraged by fiscal measures, provision of enhanced routes and promotional programmes (e.g. National Cycle Network, personal travel plans) to adopt more sustainable lifestyles and reduce their reliance on private vehicles for everyday travel, leisure and tourism
  - affluence and the ‘experience economy’ - despite the ‘credit crunch’, people (especially ABC1s) are prepared to spend money on experience-based leisure and activity tourism, including walking, cycling and riding short-breaks and ‘stay-cations’
  - communications, marketing and product development – media programmes (e.g. *Countryfile*, *Coast*), the marketing of all-terrain bikes, outdoor clothing and activity breaks, along with enhanced destination marketing and product development (e.g. trails, user-friendly accommodation) are encouraging more people to explore and enjoy our coasts and countryside
  - health and well-being – increasing awareness of obesity and campaigns to encourage exercise (e.g. health walks) are encouraging people to walk and cycle

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<sup>2</sup> The percentages of those undertaking mountain biking and other types of cycling add up to over 100%, as some respondents will have undertaken both types of cycling.

- social inclusion – socially and physically disadvantaged groups in society are under-represented amongst those enjoying the outdoors. Longer distance routes can offer opportunities for everyday activity and special programmes or events on safe, off-road paths, including sections suitable for mobility scooters.

Figure 2.1 Drivers of potential growth in use of longer distance routes



2.4.16 Some key trends in longer distance route markets and users' expectations are evident, which should be taken into account in the development and promotion of longer distance routes and associated facilities. These include –

- increasing competition from domestic and overseas destinations – more national and international destinations are providing diverse activities and high quality recreational routes, supported by quality accommodation and visitor services (e.g. guided holidays, cycle hire between tourism centres). Scotland's routes and activity packages will require to at least match market expectations, if Scotland is to remain a destination of choice for activity holidays and short breaks
- a significant proportion of walkers, cyclists and other route users are seeking 'softer', more comfortable, experiences – the principal markets for longer distance routes are not self-sufficient, often self-challenging, long distance walkers and cyclists, but those seeking multi-day, or day, trips from home or holiday accommodation, on well-maintained and signed routes, with readily available information and good places to stay, eat and drink
- use of public transport – where suitable public transport services, including trains and buses which will transport bicycles, are available and convenient, walkers and cyclists will take advantage of such services to travel to the start of, or return from, a linear route - especially, where they wish to walk or cycle longer distance routes in day, or multi-day, sections
- growth in off-road cycling markets and provision – investment in the National Cycle Network, cycle paths and local routes has greatly enhanced provision and encouraged the growth of off-road cycling. The purpose-built mountain biking centres (e.g. 7 Stanes Centres) have been very successful, but there are opportunities to provide more, longer distance off-road forest, countryside and coastal cycle routes catering for cyclists with a broader range of interests and less technical skills.



### 3. AUDIT OF LONGER DISTANCE ROUTES AND POTENTIAL LINK ROUTES

#### 3.1 Audit intentions, scope and sources

- 3.1.1 The audit focuses on **longer distance routes**, with the intention of –
- a. identifying and mapping designated and other longer distance routes
  - b. collecting and collating background information on these routes, where available, including data on –
    - the route – its status, year of opening, length, key locations on the route, links to other longer distance routes, local authority area, stage of development and themes
    - route users – principal user types, whether these were day, multi-day or all-way users, levels of use, users' expenditures, user experience and market potential
    - route management – management body, key partners, management service (e.g. rangers) and involvement of volunteers
    - route marketing and services – publications, website and availability of commercial services (e.g. accommodation, walking holiday operators)
    - supplementary information – route condition, characteristics, and potential to enhance/extend the route and its user markets.
- 3.1.2 In addition to collecting information on longer distance routes, less comprehensive data were sought on longer **link routes**, which may offer potential to extend or link longer distance routes. Where available, information collected on each link route included its status, year of opening, length, links to longer distance routes, local authority area(s), stage of development and themes.
- 3.1.3 Many routes were readily identified as meriting inclusion in this audit – especially where these have a well-developed identity, are signed and/or waymarked, have effective management arrangements, and have published or website information. However, a range of longer distance routes, despite providing for recreation or active travel, were omitted from the audit, including –
- a. lengthy on-road sections of the National Cycle Network (NCN) - as the focus of this research is primarily on off-road recreational opportunities. Extensive, mostly off-road, sections of National Cycle Network have been included in the audit (e.g. Clyde to Forth Cycle Route) and the National Cycle Network, as a whole, is recognised as an important complementary resource for recreation and sustainable travel
  - b. heritage paths, rights of way and similar routes - where these comprise lengthy mountainous or 'wild country' paths, with no/few 'escape routes' and/or limited visitor services. Such routes, along with 'virtual routes', may facilitate 'epic journeys', but do not meet the needs of the target market sectors for promoted longer distance routes, as identified in s. 5.4
  - c. routes provided and promoted by activity holiday providers and others specifically for their clients' benefit.
- 3.1.4 Data on longer distance and potential link routes were collected from a variety of sources, including –
- a. websites – for example, local authorities', public agencies', partnerships' (e.g. Moray Firth Partnership), activity tourism (e.g. *CyclingScotland*, *walkhighlands*) and interest groups' websites (e.g. Long Distance Walkers Association's, Scotways' and Sustrans' websites)
  - b. publications – such as paths leaflets, activity tourism brochures, guidebooks and magazine articles



c. plans, strategies and research studies – including core path plans, tourism strategies and route feasibility studies.

3.1.5 Information from these sources was verified and supplemented through the survey of access authorities and interviews with other key informants (e.g. staff of British Waterways and Central Scotland Forest Trust). In addition, respondents and interviewees were asked to contribute local knowledge on the condition and characteristics of each route and the potential for further development of the route and its markets.

3.1.6 This was the first substantial audit of Scotland's longer distance routes and information was not available to fully 'populate' the information sheets and summaries. Hence, the audit information should be regarded as an initial stage in the development of a more comprehensive database for longer distance routes (see s. 7.3).

### 3.2 Presentation of the audit data

3.2.1 Information sheets have been produced for 48 longer distance routes (designated LDRs, other longer distance routes and virtual routes) and information boxes were completed for around 90 potential link routes. These data are summarised in Tables 3.3 and 3.4 and the full information sheets have been presented to SNH as a separate Working Paper. Maps Ai and ii illustrates the approximate location of each route.

### 3.3 The longer distance routes network – overview

3.3.1 Maps Ai and ii shows the concentration of longer distance routes in specific areas – particularly, the Scottish Borders, the Central Belt and the North East. There are no promoted longer distance routes beyond the Moray Firth, or on the Western Isles, or the Orkney and Shetland Islands.

3.3.2 This report and other commentators refer to the **network** of longer distance routes. This is a misnomer, as the 'family' of longer distance routes do not form a coherent or integrated network, and are not planned, managed or marketed as a network. Recommendations for adopting a more integrated, network-based, approach to developing and promoting longer distance routes are presented in section 5.

3.3.3 Table 3.1 illustrates the principal types, number and lengths of Scotland's longer distance routes, in late 2009. This shows that **34 longer distance routes**, with a total length of over **3,550 km**, are available on the ground and promoted more widely - excluding routes in development or being planned, and virtual routes. These include -

- **four designated Long Distance Routes** - which collectively extend over 744 kms. With the addition of the **Pennine Way National Trail** (11 kms in Scotland), these statutory routes comprise one-fifth (21%) of the overall network of longer distance routes
- **29 other longer distance routes** – which extend to almost 2,800 km in total.

In addition –

- **8 longer distance routes are at an advanced stage of development or planning** (e.g. Three Lochs Way, Great Glen Canoe Trail) - these will add almost 680 km to the network
- **6 'virtual' longer distance routes** have been identified – each over 100 km in length and covering around 1,600 km in total. These are only examples of 'virtual routes' and many others exist in guidebooks, on websites, etc..

Each of these categories of longer distance route is described in more detail below (s. 3.4-3.6) and critically assessed in the section 4.

*Table 3.1 Longer distance routes in Scotland*

<b>Longer Distance Routes</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Length (kms)</b>
<b>Designated Routes</b>		
• Long Distance Routes	4	744
• Pennine Way National Trail (Scotland)	1	11
<b>Other Promoted Longer Distance Routes</b>	29	2,797
<b>Total Longer Distance Routes (2009)</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>3,552</b>
<b>Additional Longer Distance Routes</b>		
• Routes in development/advanced planning	8	678
• Virtual Longer Distance Routes (examples)	6	1,600

Notes: Lengths are approximate and may include gaps (e.g. gaps in Aberdeenshire Coastal Path). The data exclude extensive on-road sections of the National Cycle Network (see s. 3.1.3).

### **3.4 Audit Information on the designated long distance routes and Pennine Way**

3.4.1 The four Long Distance Routes (LDRs) are well-established and relatively well-known amongst outdoor users and local communities in Scotland, but, with the exception of the West Highland Way, may not be well-known UK-wide or internationally. Only a short section of the Pennine Way National Trail lies in Scotland - in the Scottish Borders. This part of the Pennine Way attracts mainly the more dedicated all-Way walkers and some local use, as it involves a fairly challenging journey over the Cheviot Hills and lies at the far end of Pennine Way for most users.

#### *The routes*

3.4.2 The four designated LDRs range in length from 117 kms (Great Glen Way) to 340 kms (Southern Upland Way) and are amongst the longest of Scotland's longer distance routes. Collectively, they pass through large parts of Scotland, with the Southern Upland Way starting/ending at Port Patrick or Cockburnspath in the South, the Speyside Way starting/ending at Buckie on the Moray Firth, and the Great Glen Way starting/ending at Inverness. The Great Glen Way and West Highland Way each start/end in a city (i.e. Inverness and Glasgow) and meet at Fort William.

3.4.3 Collectively and individually, the designated LDRs present users with a wide variety of Scotland's more distinctive and attractive scenery and landscape characteristics, including sections along the coast, lochs and rivers, across moorland and mountainous terrain, and through forests, farmland and rural settlements. Each route has interpretive provision, but none of the LDRs has a dominant theme.

3.4.4 Sections of the Southern Upland Way and the West Highland Way present users with challenging travel over high, remote ground. In contrast, most of the Speyside Way and Great Glen Way, southern sections of the West Highland Way, and coastal sections of the Southern Upland Way, offer easier travel – especially former railway line sections of the Speyside Way and towpath sections of the Great Glen Way.

3.4.5 Information on the Great Glen Way illustrates the variety of types of path along this route, with 30% comprising canal towpaths, 30% on forest tracks and 40% on purpose-built paths, minor roads, footways or link paths. High levels of rainfall, areas of deep peat, and sections of path shared with livestock, contribute to issues of waterlogging, erosion and uncomfortable or difficult travel on sections of the Southern Upland Way, Speyside Way and West Highland Way.

*Route users and user markets*

3.4.6 Originally established as routes primarily for walkers, the designated LDRs are attracting increasing use by cyclists, horse riders and disabled users, as sections are improved and as a result of the rights of responsible access. However, use by other users is restricted on many sections of the LDRs, by physical constraints, route conditions (e.g. 'soft'/wet surfaces) and barriers, such as stiles or gates. For example, while former railway line sections of the Speyside Way are generally suitable for all-abilities use, the section from Ballindalloch to Cromdale can only sustain walkers.

3.4.7 Table 3.2 illustrates the levels of use experienced on the designated LDRs and users' expenditures. These data may now be exceeded as more mountain bikers, participants in charity and competitive events and others use the routes. The data show that –

- the majority of LDR users are day-/part-day users, rather than all-Way users - with the exception of the West Highland Way, which attracts a high proportion of all-Way users
- LDR users have substantial expenditures - which will largely benefit the communities in the vicinity of the LDRs.

Only the West Highland Way and Great Glen Way have a shared start/finish point and it is estimated that around 12% of users walk both routes during the same trip.

*Table 3.2 Designated longer distance routes: user types, levels and expenditures*

Long Distance Route	Use of Route (%ages)			Users/year		All-Way/Multi-day Users' Expenditures
	all-Way	day users	part-day	all-Way	part-Way	
<b>Southern Upland Way (2004)</b>	5%	12%	83%	1,000	52,600	£0.5m
<b>West Highland Way</b>	45%	10%	45%	30,000	50,-60,000	£3.5m
<b>Speyside Way</b>	6.5%	93.5%		2,500	40,000	£2.8m
<b>Great Glen Way (2004/5)</b>	15%	10%	75%	35,454		n.a.

Source: survey data provided by route managers

3.4.8 With the exception of lengthy moorland sections of the Southern Upland Way and some forest sections on other routes (e.g. Great Glen Way), the designated LDRs 'deliver' an exceptional user experience, including the iconic scenery of Loch Lomond, Glen Nevis, the Great Glen and Strathspey, unique attractions - such as the Borders Abbeys, Loch Ness Monster and Speyside's whisky industry, wildlife and cultural interests, and a sense of challenge - but with visitor services within acceptable distances of most sections of each route.

3.4.9 In response to questions on the potential for growth in use of the designated LDRs, their managers have identified –

- issues of accommodation capacity at peak periods
- scope to extend shoulder season use, multi-day breaks and international visitor markets, through enhanced marketing and special promotions
- scope to expand community use
- potential for growth in mountain biking and horse riding, if the routes are upgraded to sustain such uses.

Table 3.3 Longer distance routes in Scotland: summary

Route	Year Opened	Length (km)	Principal Users	Links to other Longer Distance Routes	Start-Finish	Management Partners	Principal Publication	Websites	Services (see key below)
<b>Designated Long Distance Routes</b>									
<b>A. Southern Upland Way</b> (inc. Sir Walter Scott Way)	1984	340 (148)	walkers, cyclists-parts rider-parts (walkers)	Annandale Way, South of Scotland Countryside Trails, Borders Abbeys Way, St Cuthbert's Way, John Muir Way	Portpatrick – Cockburnspath (Moffat – Cockburnspath)	Dumfries & Galloway, Scottish Borders, SNH (private initiative)	<i>The Southern Upland Way</i> (Mercat Press) (on-line guide)	<a href="http://www.southernuplandway.gov.uk">www.southernuplandway.gov.uk</a> ( <a href="http://www.sirwalterscottway.com">www.sirwalterscottway.com</a> )	a, b, h (a, b, h)
<b>B. West Highland Way</b>	1980	152	walkers, cyclists-parts rider-parts	Rob Roy Way, Great Glen Way, Clyde Walkway, West Loch Lomond Cycle Route, Three Lochs Way, Famous Highland Drove Walk	Milngavie – Fort William	E. Dunbartonshire, Stirling, Argyll & Bute and Highland Councils, LLTNPA, SNH	<i>The West Highland Way – Official Guide</i> (Mercat Press)	<a href="http://www.west-highland-way.co.uk">www.west-highland-way.co.uk</a>	a, b, h
<b>C. Speyside Way</b> (incl. Cullen - Garmouth Cycle Route)	1981 (part)	135	walkers, cyclists-parts rider-parts	Dava Way, Moray Coast Path	Buckie – Aviemore, or Tomintoul (prop. extension to Newtonmore)	Highland and Moray Councils, Cairngorms NPA, SNH	<i>The Speyside Way</i> (Rucksack Readers)	<a href="http://www.speysideway.org">www.speysideway.org</a>	a, b, h
<b>D. Great Glen Way</b>	2002	117	walkers, cyclists-parts rider-parts	Gt. Glen Canoe Trail, West Highland Way, Cape Wrath Trail, Famous Highland Drove Walk	Fort William - Inverness	Highland Council, FCS, BWB, SNH	<i>The Great Glen Way</i> (Rucksack Readers)	<a href="http://www.greatglenway.com">www.greatglenway.com</a>	a, b, h
<b>E. Pennine Way National Trail</b> (part in Scotland)		429 (all)	walkers, rider-parts	St. Cuthbert's Way, South of Scotland Countryside Trails	Edale (Peak District) – Kirk Yetholm	Natural England + Scottish Borders Council (Scotland)	<i>Pennine Way – An Introduction</i> (Natural England)	<a href="http://www.nationaltrail.co.uk/PennineWay/index.asp?Pageld=1">www.nationaltrail.co.uk/PennineWay/index.asp?Pageld=1</a>	a, b, h
<b>Other Promoted Longer Distance Routes</b>									
<b>1. Borders Abbeys Way</b>		109	walkers, cyclists-parts rider-parts	South of Scotland Countryside Trails, Southern Upland Way, St. Cuthbert's Way	Kelso-Jedburgh -Hawick- Melrose-Selkirk -Kelso	Scottish Borders Council (prev. Scottish Borders Paths)	<i>Borders Abbeys Way</i> (web booklet)	<a href="http://www.bordersabbeysway.com">www.bordersabbeysway.com</a>	a, b, h
<b>2. St. Cuthbert's Way</b> (part of European Path E2)	1996	100 (51 in Scotland)	walkers, cyclists-parts rider-parts	Southern Upland Way, S. of Scotland Countryside Trails, Pennine Way	Melrose – Lindisfarne (England)	Scottish Borders Council (prev. Scottish Borders Paths)	<i>St. Cuthbert's Way</i> (Mercat Press)	<a href="http://www.stcuthbertsway.net">www.stcuthbertsway.net</a>	a, b, h
<b>3. South of Scotland Countryside Trails</b> (includes Border Country Rides, Buccleugh Rides, etc.)	2005	350	riders, walkers, cyclists-parts	Southern Upland Way, S. of Scotland Countryside Trails, Borders Abbeys Way, St. Cuthbert's Way, Pennine Way	various	BHS, Dumfries & Galloway and Scottish Borders Councils, etc.	<i>South of Scotland Countryside Trails</i> (South of Scotland Countryside Trails partners)	<a href="http://www.southofscotlandcountrysidetrails.co.uk/">www.southofscotlandcountrysidetrails.co.uk/</a>	a, h
<b>4. Annandale Way</b>	2009	88	walkers, cyclists-parts rider-parts	Southern Upland Way, South of Scotland Countryside Trails	Moffat – Solway Coast (Newbie Barns)	Dumfries & Galloway Council, Sulwath Connections	<i>Annandale Way Guide</i> (Sulwath Connections)	<a href="http://www.sulwathconnections.org/index.php?page=annandale-way">www.sulwathconnections.org/index.php?page=annandale-way</a>	a

Note. Table includes promoted longer distance routes of 32+ kms, but excludes primarily on-road NCN routes. Information on range of users was not readily available, so may be incomplete.  
Key. a: accommodation b: baggage transfers h: walking, cycling or other activity holiday operators

Table 3.3 Longer distance routes in Scotland: summary (continued)

Route	Year Opened	Length (km)	Principal Users	Links to other Longer Distance Routes	Start-Finish	Management Partners	Principal Publication	Websites	Services (see key below)
<b>5. Kintyre Way</b>	2006	140	walkers, cyclists-parts rider-parts	Isle of Arran Coastal Way, Cowal Way (ferries)	Tarbert - Southend	Argyll & Bute Council and Long & Winding Way Company Ltd.	<i>Kintyre Way</i> (Long & Winding Road), <i>The Kintyre Way</i> (Rucksack Readers)	<a href="http://www.kintyreway.com/">www.kintyreway.com/</a>	a, b, h
<b>6. River Ayr Way</b>	2005	66	walkers, cyclists-parts rider-parts	Ayrshire Coastal Path, Coalfield Way, The Weavers Trail	Muirkirk - Ayr	South Ayrshire and East Ayrshire Councils and partners	<i>River Ayr Way</i> (East Ayrshire Council)	<a href="http://www.theriverayrway.org">www.theriverayrway.org</a>	a
<b>7. Ayrshire Coastal Path</b> (incl. Ayrshire Coast Cycleway)	2008	161 (30)	walkers, cyclists-parts rider-parts	proposed link to Southern Upland Way, Carrick Way, River Ayr Way	Stranraer (Glenapp) - Skelmorlie	Dumfries & Galloway, South Ayrshire and North Ayrshire Councils, Ayr Rotary Club	<i>Ayrshire Coastal Path</i> (Begg, J.), <i>Lochs and Glens South</i> (Sustrans)	<a href="http://www.ayrshirecoastalpath.org">www.ayrshirecoastalpath.org</a>	a
<b>8. Cowal Way</b>	2003	92	walkers, cyclists-parts rider-parts	West Highland Way (ferry), Kintyre Way (ferry), West L. Lomond Cycle Route, Three Lochs Way	Portavadie - Inveruglas	Argyll & Bute Council, Loch Lomond & Trossachs NPA	<i>Cowal Way with Isle of Bute</i> (Rucksack Readers)	<a href="http://www.cowalway.org.uk">www.cowalway.org.uk</a>	a
<b>9. Ardgartan Peninsula Circuit</b>		32	walkers, cyclists-parts rider-parts	Cowal Way, Three Lochs Way	Ardgartan - Lochgoilhead - Ardgartan	FCS	<i>Cycling in the Forest: Argyll Forest Park</i> (FCS)	<a href="http://www.forestry.gov.uk/Website/ourwoods.nsf/LUWebDocsByKey/ScotlandArgyllandButeArgyllForestParkArdgartanArdgartanVisitorCentreArdgartanPeninsulaCircuit">www.forestry.gov.uk/Website/ourwoods.nsf/LUWebDocsByKey/ScotlandArgyllandButeArgyllForestParkArdgartanArdgartanVisitorCentreArdgartanPeninsulaCircuit</a>	a
<b>10. Isle of Arran Coastal Way</b>		104	walkers	Kintyre Way, Ayrshire Coast Path (ferries)	Circuit of Arran	North Ayrshire Council, Coastal Way Support Group	<i>The Arran Coastal Way</i> (Rucksack Readers)	<a href="http://www.coastalway.co.uk">www.coastalway.co.uk</a>	a, b, h
<b>11. West Island Way</b>		48	walkers, cyclists-parts rider-parts	Cowal Way, Ayrshire Coastal Path, Clyde to Forth Cycle Route, Greenock Cut & Kelly's Cut (ferries)	Kilchattan Bay - Port Bannatyne	Argyll & Bute Council, Bute Ranger Service	<i>Cowal Way with Isle of Bute</i> (Rucksack Readers)	<a href="http://www.bestofbute.co.uk/cat=80">www.bestofbute.co.uk/cat=80</a>	a
<b>12. Greenock Cut &amp; Kelly's Cut</b>		32	walkers, cyclists	West Island Way (ferry), Clyde to Forth Cycle Route	Greenock – Wemyss Bay	Inverclyde Council		<a href="http://cycling.visitscotland.com/find_route/glasgow/the_greenock_cut">http://cycling.visitscotland.com/find_route/glasgow/the_greenock_cut</a>	
<b>13. Clyde to Forth Cycle Route</b> (incl. Balerno to Bathgate and Paisley to Gourock Cycle Routes)		80	cyclists, walkers, riders-parts	Greenock Cut & Kelly's Cut, West Highland Way (by Kelvin Walkway), Clyde Walkway, Forth-Clyde/Union Canal, John Muir Way	Gourock - Musselburgh	Inverclyde, Renfrewshire, Glasgow, N. Lanarkshire, W. Lothian & Edinburgh Councils, Sustrans	<i>NCN Forth &amp; Clyde Cycle Route</i> (Sustrans)	<a href="http://www.sustrans.org.uk/what-we-do/national-cycle-network/long-distance-rides/scotland/clyde-to-forth">www.sustrans.org.uk/what-we-do/national-cycle-network/long-distance-rides/scotland/clyde-to-forth</a>	a
<b>14. Clyde Walkway</b>	2008	65	walkers, cyclists-parts rider-parts	Clyde to Forth Cycle Route, Clyde & Loch Lomond Cycle Route	Glasgow – New Lanark	Glasgow City, South Lanarkshire and North Lanarkshire Councils	<i>The Clyde Walkway: Glasgow City Centre to New Lanark</i> (Clyde Walkway Partners)	<a href="http://www.visitlanarkshire.com/things-to-do/walking/Clyde-Walkway/">www.visitlanarkshire.com/things-to-do/walking/Clyde-Walkway/</a>	a

Note. Table includes promoted longer distance routes of 32+ kms, but excludes primarily on-road NCN routes. Information on range of users was not readily available, so may be incomplete. Key. a: accommodation b: baggage transfers h: walking, cycling or other activity holiday operators

Table 3.3 Longer distance routes in Scotland: summary (continued)

Route	Year Opened	Length (km)	Principal Users	Links to other Longer Distance Routes	Start-Finish	Management Partners	Principal Publication	Websites	Services (see key below)
<b>15. Clyde &amp; Loch Lomond Cycleway + West Loch Lomond Cycle Path</b>		32 + 24	cyclists, walkers, riders-parts	Clyde Walkway, Forth-Clyde Canal/Union Canal, Three Lochs Way	Glasgow – Balloch - Tarbet	Glasgow, West Dunbartonshire and Argyll & Bute Councils, LLTTNPA	<i>NCN Clyde and Loch Lomond Cycleway</i> (Sustrans)	<a href="http://www.sustrans.org.uk/assets/files/leaflets/Clyde%20and%20Loch%20Lomond%20leaflet.pdf">www.sustrans.org.uk/assets/files/leaflets/Clyde%20and%20Loch%20Lomond%20leaflet.pdf</a>	a
<b>16. Forth-Clyde Canal/ Union Canal Towpath</b>	2001 (re-opened)	56 + 51	walkers, cyclists	Clyde Walkway, Clyde & Loch Lomond Cycle Route Clyde to Forth Cycle Route, Round the Forth Route	Bowling-Edinburgh/Grangemouth	East Dunbartonshire, Glasgow, North Lanarkshire, Stirling, Falkirk, West Lothian and Edinburgh Councils, BWB	<i>Forth &amp; Clyde and Union Canals with the Crinan Canal</i> (GEOprojects)	<a href="http://www.waterscape.com/canals-and-rivers/forth-and-clyde-canal">www.waterscape.com/canals-and-rivers/forth-and-clyde-canal</a> <a href="http://www.waterscape.com/canals-and-rivers/union-canal">www.waterscape.com/canals-and-rivers/union-canal</a>	a, b, h
<b>17. Rob Roy Way</b> (incl. Callander-Killin Cycle Route)		148	walkers, cyclists-parts rider-parts	West Highland Way, Famous Highland Drove Road, Heart of Scotland 100 Mile Challenge Route, proposed King's Highway	Drymen – Pitlochry	LLTTNPA, Stirling and Perth & Kinross Councils (private initiative; not integrated trail)	<i>The Rob Roy Way</i> (Rucksack Readers)	<a href="http://www.robroyway.com/">www.robroyway.com/</a> ; <a href="http://www.routes2ride.co.uk/scotland/routes2ride/callander_strathhyre">www.routes2ride.co.uk/scotland/routes2ride/callander_strathhyre</a>	a, b, h
<b>18. Round the Forth Cycle Route</b> (incl. parts of Nortrail/ North Sea Cycle Route)		214	walkers, cyclists-parts rider-parts	John Muir Way, Forth-Clyde/Union Canals, Fife Coastal Path, proposed King's Highway	Dunbar-Edinburgh-Stirling-Kirkcaldy	E. Lothian, Edinburgh, W. Lothian, Falkirk, Stirling, Fife & Clackmannanshire Councils, Sustrans, Transport Scotland	<i>NCN Round the Forth Route</i> (Sustrans)	<a href="http://www.sustrans.org.uk/what-we-do/national-cycle-network/route-numbering-system/98">www.sustrans.org.uk/what-we-do/national-cycle-network/route-numbering-system/98</a> <a href="http://www.forthestuaryforum.co.uk">www.forthestuaryforum.co.uk</a>	a
<b>19. John Muir Way</b> (incl. parts of Nortrail/ North Sea Cycle Route)		72	walkers, cyclists-parts rider-parts	Southern Upland Way, Clyde - Forth Cycle Route, Round the Forth Route	Musselburgh -Dunglass	East Lothian Council	<i>The John Muir Way</i> (East Lothian Council)	<a href="http://www.visiteastlothian.org/assets/pdfs/jmw_overall_0207_fin1.pdf">www.visiteastlothian.org/assets/pdfs/jmw_overall_0207_fin1.pdf</a>	a, h
<b>20. Fife Coastal Path</b> (incl. parts of Nortrail/ North Sea Cycle Route)		150	walkers, cyclists-parts rider-parts	Round the Forth Route, Dundee Green Circular (via Tay Bridge)	North Queensferry - Newburgh (+ extension to Culross)	Fife Council, Fife Coast and Countryside Trust	<i>Fife Coastal Path</i> (Fife Coast & Countryside Trust), <i>Along the Fife Coastal Path: Official Guide</i> (Mercat Press)	<a href="http://www.fifecoastalpath.co.uk">www.fifecoastalpath.co.uk</a>	a, b, h
<b>21. Dundee Green Circular</b>		42	walkers, cyclists-parts rider-parts	Fife Coastal Path (via Tay Bridge), Dundee to Arbroath Cycle Route	Route around Dundee	Dundee City and Angus Councils, Sustrans	<i>Dundee's Green Circular</i> (Dundee City Council)	<a href="http://www.dundee.gov.uk/dundeeecity/uploaded_publications/publication_500.pdf">www.dundee.gov.uk/dundeeecity/uploaded_publications/publication_500.pdf</a>	a
<b>22. Cateran Trail</b>		103	walkers, cyclists-parts rider-parts	Famous Highland Drove Walk, proposed link to Rob Roy Way	Blairstown-Alyth-Blairstown	Perth & Kinross Council, Perth & Kinross Countryside Trust	<i>The Cateran Trail</i> (Rucksack Readers)	<a href="http://www.caterantrail.org">www.caterantrail.org</a>	a, b, h
<b>23. Deeside Way</b>	part open	26+18.5	walkers, cyclists, riders	Aberdeenshire Coastal Path	Aberdeen-Banchory; Aboyne-Dinnet	Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils, Cairngorms NPA, Sustrans	none	<a href="http://www.durris.net/html/deeside_way_-_route.html">www.durris.net/html/deeside_way_-_route.html</a>	a, h
<b>24. Formatine &amp; Buchan Way</b>		86	walkers, cyclists, riders	Aberdeenshire Coastal Path	Dyce-Fraserburgh	Aberdeenshire Council	leaflet out of print	<a href="http://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/outdooraccess/long_routes/formartine_buchan.asp">www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/outdooraccess/long_routes/formartine_buchan.asp</a>	a

Note. Table includes promoted longer distance routes of 32+ kms, but excludes primarily on-road NCN routes. Information on range of users was not readily available, so may be incomplete.  
Key. a: accommodation b: baggage transfers h: walking, cycling or other activity holiday operators



Table 3.3 Longer distance routes in Scotland: summary (continued)

Route	Year Opened	Length (km)	Principal Users	Links to other Longer Distance Routes	Start-Finish	Management Partners	Principal Publication	Websites	Services (see key below)
<b>25. Gordon Way</b>	part open	32	walkers, cyclists-parts riders-parts	none	Rhynie - Bennachie	Aberdeenshire Council, FCS	<i>Bennachie and the Gordon Way</i> (FCS Commission)	<a href="http://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/ou-dooraccess/long_routes/gordon.asp">www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/ou-dooraccess/long_routes/gordon.asp</a>	a
<b>26. Aberdeenshire Coastal Path</b> (+ Aberdeen City's North Sea Trail) (parts of Nortrail/North Sea Cycle Route)		206 (length of coast)	walkers, cyclists-parts rider-parts	Deeside Way, Formatine and Buchan Way, Moray Coastal Trail	St. Cyrus - Cullen	Aberdeenshire Council	on-line guide and maps	<a href="http://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/ou-dooraccess/coastal_path/guide_maps.asp">www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/ou-dooraccess/coastal_path/guide_maps.asp</a>	a
<b>27. Moray Coastal Trail</b> (incl. parts of Nortrail/ North Sea Cycle Route)		80	walkers, cyclists-parts rider-parts	Aberdeenshire Coastal Path, Dava Way	Cullen - Forres	Moray Council	<i>Moray Coastal Trail</i> (Moray Council)	<a href="http://www.morayways.org.uk/route_details.asp?routeid=116">www.morayways.org.uk/route_details.asp?routeid=116</a>	a
<b>28. Dava Way</b> (incl. Dava Way Ride)		40	walkers, cyclists-parts rider-parts	Speyside Way, Moray Coastal Trail	Grantown-on-Spey - Forres	Moray and Highland Councils, Dava Way Assoc., Cairngorms NPA	<i>The Dava Way</i> (Dava Way Assoc.)	<a href="http://www.davaway.org.uk">www.davaway.org.uk</a>	a
<b>29. Trail of the 7 Lochs</b>		80	riders, walkers	Great Glen Cycle Route	Circular route – from Dores	South Loch Ness Access Group		<a href="http://www.southlochnessaccess.org.uk/index.asp?pageid=17340">www.southlochnessaccess.org.uk/index.asp?pageid=17340</a>	a, h
<b>Longer Distance Routes at Development or Advanced Planning Stage (2009)</b>									
<b>D1. Carrick Way</b>	development	160	walkers, cyclists-parts rider-parts	Ayrshire Coastal Path, Southern Upland Way	Girvan-Maybole-Barrhill-Girvan	Ayrshire Walking Group, South Ayrshire Council, Girvan Horizons	no publications (2009)	proposals: <a href="http://www.girvan-online.net/?listing=653&amp;node_id=27&amp;search=carrick%20way">www.girvan-online.net/?listing=653&amp;node_id=27&amp;search=carrick%20way</a>	a
<b>D2. The Coalfield Cycle Route</b>	development	79	cyclists, walkers, riders-parts	River Ayr Way, The Weavers Trail, Southern Upland Way	Dalmellington - Muirkirk	East Ayrshire and Dumfries & Galloway Council, Estates	no publications (2009)		a
<b>D3. The Weavers Trail</b>	development	43	walkers, cyclists-parts	River Ayr, Clyde Walkway, The Coalfield Cycle Route	Muirkirk - Eaglesham	East Ayrshire and East Renfrewshire Councils	no publications (2009)		a
<b>D4. Three Lochs Way</b>	development	50	walkers cyclists-parts riders-parts	Cowal Way, West Highland Way (ferry), Clyde & L. Lomond Cycleway and West Loch Lomond Cycle Path	Balloch - Inveruglas	Argyll & Bute and W. Dunbartonshire Councils, LLTTNPA	no publications (2009)	proposals: <a href="http://www.hgbg.org.uk/documents/Greenery_31.pdf">www.hgbg.org.uk/documents/Greenery_31.pdf</a>	a
<b>D5. King's Highway</b>	planning	40	cyclists, walkers, riders-parts	Rob Roy Way, W.Highland Way, Round the Forth	Stirling - Drymen	Stirling Council	no publications (2009)		a
<b>D6. Oban – Ballachulish Cycle Route</b> (part of prop. Caledonia Way)	development	100	cyclists, walkers, riders-parts		Oban – Ballachulish	Argyll & Bute and Highland Councils, Sustrans		<a href="http://www.sustrans.org.uk/sustrans-near-you/scotland/scotland-news">www.sustrans.org.uk/sustrans-near-you/scotland/scotland-news</a>	
<b>D7. Great Glen Canoe Trail</b>	start in 2010	96	canoeists	Great Glen Way	Banavie - Inverness	British Waterways, FCS, Highland Council, SNH	<i>Canoe Trail Guide to the Great Glen</i> (SCA)		a
<b>D8. Inverness– Fort William Cycle Route (NCN78)</b>	planning	110+	cyclists, walkers	Great Glen Way, West Highland Way	Fort William - Inverness	Sustrans, BW, FCS, Highland Council, SNH			a, h

Note. Table includes promoted longer distance routes of 32+ kms, but excludes primarily on-road NCN routes. Information on range of users was not readily available, so may be incomplete. Key. a: accommodation b: baggage transfers h: walking, cycling or other activity holiday operators

Table 3.3 Longer distance routes in Scotland: summary (continued)

Route	Year Opened	Length (km)	Principal Users	Links to other Longer Distance Routes	Start-Finish	Management Partners	Principal Publication	Websites	Services (see key below)
<b>Guidebook or Website Promoted Longer Distance Routes</b>									
<b>V1. Scottish Coast to Coast</b>	unofficial trail	205	walkers	West Highland Way, Rob Roy Way, Fife Coastal Path	Oban – St. Andrews	not a managed trail	<i>The Scottish Coast to Coast</i> (Challenge Publications)		a
<b>V2. Famous Highland Drove Walk</b>	unofficial trail	320	walkers	Sutherland Trail, West Highland Way	Glenbrittle (Skye) - Crieff	not a managed trail	<i>The Famous Highland Drove Walk</i> (Grey Stone Books)		a
<b>V3. Heart Of Scotland 100 Mile Challenge Route</b>	unofficial trail	110	walkers	Rob Roy Way, CATERAN Trail	circular route in Highland Perthshire	not a managed trail	route description on website	<a href="http://www.heartofscotland100.org.uk">www.heartofscotland100.org.uk</a>	
<b>V4. Scottish Sea Kayak Trail</b>	unofficial trail	500	kayakers	no other sea trails	Gigha – Summer Isles	not a managed trail	<i>Scottish Sea Kayak Trail</i> (Pesda Press)	<a href="http://www.scottishseakayaktrail.com/About.html">www.scottishseakayaktrail.com/About.html</a>	a
<b>V5. Cape Wrath Trail</b> (incl. section on Great Glen Way)	unofficial trail	321	walkers	West Highland Way, Great Glen Way, Sutherland Trail	Fort William – Cape Wrath	not a managed trail	<i>North to the Cape: A Trek from Fort William to Cape Wrath</i> (Cicerone)	<a href="http://www.capewrathtrail.co.uk">www.capewrathtrail.co.uk</a>	a
<b>V6. Sutherland Trail</b>	unofficial trail	112-145	walkers	Cape Wrath Trail	Lochinver - Tongue	not a managed trail	<i>The Sutherland Trail - A Journey Through Scotland's North-west</i> (Cordee)	<a href="http://www.sutherlandtrail.co.uk">www.sutherlandtrail.co.uk</a>	a

Note. Table includes promoted longer distance routes of 32+ kms, but excludes primarily on-road NCN routes. Information on range of users was not readily available, so may be incomplete.  
 Key. a: accommodation b: baggage transfers h: walking, cycling or other activity holiday operators

## Ai. Longer Distance Routes: North Scotland

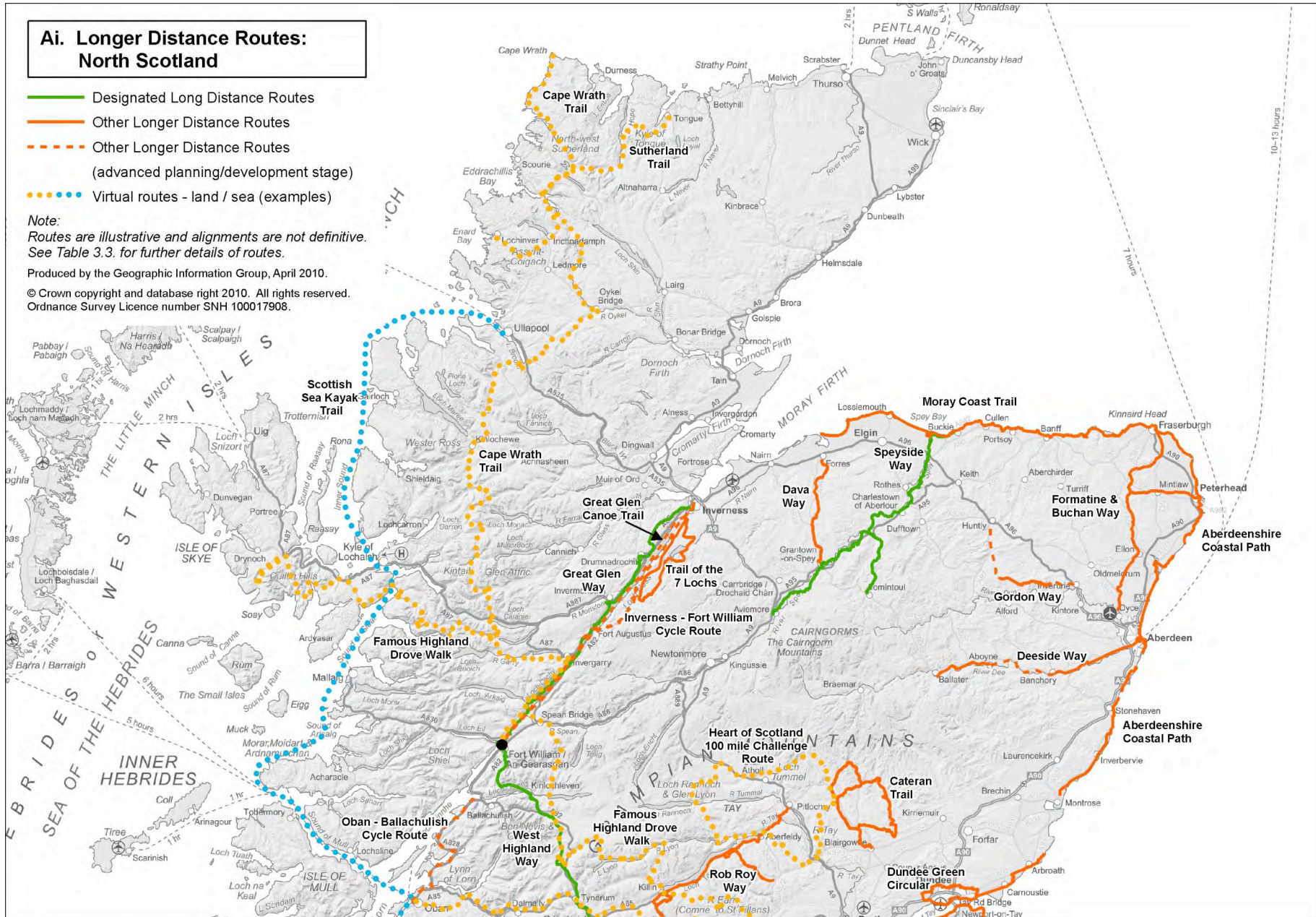
- Designated Long Distance Routes
- Other Longer Distance Routes
- - - Other Longer Distance Routes  
(advanced planning/development stage)
- Virtual routes - land / sea (examples)

**Note:**

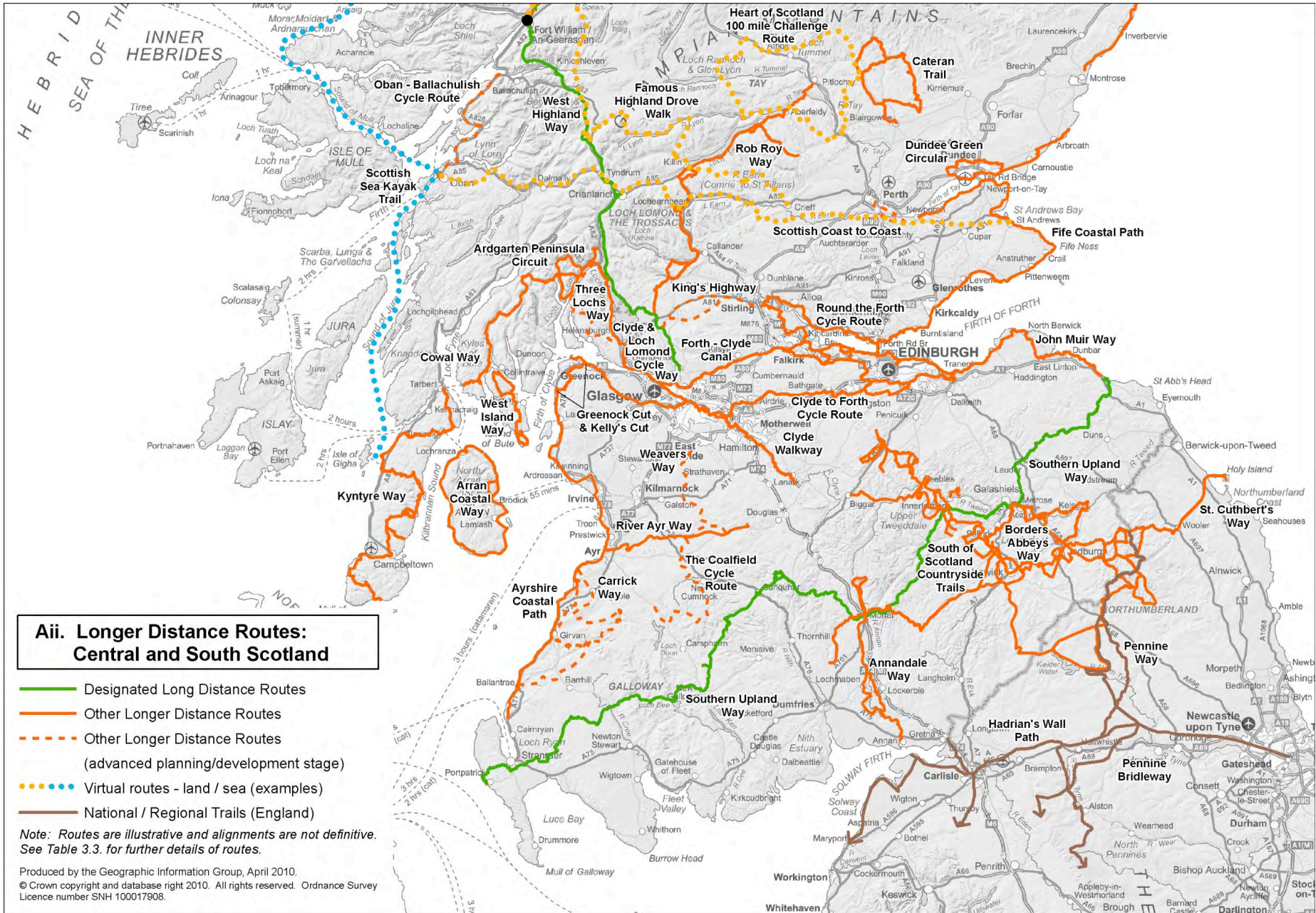
Routes are illustrative and alignments are not definitive.  
See Table 3.3. for further details of routes.

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#### *Route management and volunteer support*

- 3.4.10 Management structures for the designated LDRs have been strengthened in recent years, through –
- the establishment of joint Management Groups or similar partnership arrangements, working to a joint Minute of Agreement
  - the appointment of a single route manager and maintenance wardens and/or rangers for each LDR
  - the preparation, implementation and rolling-review of Development and Management Programmes for each LDR
  - the establishment of the Long Distance Route Managers Forum, as a liaison and coordination mechanism.
- 3.4.11 Management arrangements for the Speyside Way are under review (November 2009) and this may result in fragmentation of maintenance and other responsibilities amongst the respective authorities. This partly results from uncertainties over the Cairngorm National Park Authority's responsibilities for sections of the Speyside Way within the National Park and concerns over achieving best value for money in LDR management. However, some information and other functions may continue to be undertaken jointly. Also, the Scottish Borders section of the Southern Upland Way no longer has a dedicated maintenance ranger. Funding issues - especially, the transfer of central government support for maintaining the LDRs from SNH grant aid to Single Outcome Agreement contributions - underlie many of the current management and maintenance issues affecting these routes.
- 3.4.12 Voluntary support for the designated LDRs includes –
- the Southern Uplands Partnership's support for the Southern Upland Way, including the organisation of walking festivals
  - a voluntary path inspector, who monitors the condition of the West Highland Way within Stirling Council's area four-times each year
  - volunteers' support for the Speyside Way Visitor Centre.

#### *Route information, marketing and visitor services*

- 3.4.13 A varied range of publications, including promotional route leaflets and accommodation guides, official guidebooks and other books and maps, are available for each of the designated LDRs. Each LDR has a dedicated website, but there is no collective portal website for the LDRs.
- 3.4.14 A range of accommodation is available on each of the LDRs, except on more remote sections of the Southern Upland Way. However, accommodation can be at capacity during busy periods. Accommodation booking services, baggage/ people transfer services and walking holiday packages are available for all the LDRs.

### **3.5 Audit information on the other longer distance routes**

#### *The routes*

- 3.5.1 Information was collected on 29 other longer distance routes – largely off-road routes promoted to some extent for active travel and recreation, but not designated under the Countryside (Scotland) Act. Most of these routes have a geographical title, such as the River Ayr Way and Moray Coastal Trail, which helps users to locate the route. A few routes have a theme as their title - for example, the St. Cuthbert's Way, the Rob Roy Way and the Catheran Trail.



As shown in Table 3.4, 11 of the routes are primarily in a coastal or peninsula setting, 6 are principally along a river valley, lochside or canal, and a further 12 largely comprise other countryside (e.g. farmland, moorland, forest). Many of the routes share a combination of these characteristics.

*Table 3.4 Other longer distance routes – locations and lengths*

Principal Location	Number of Routes	Length of Other Longer Distance Routes	Number of Routes
Coastal, peninsula	11	32 - 50 km	7
River valley, lochside	5	50 - 100 km	11
Canal	1	100 - 200 km	8
Other countryside	12	200+ km	3
<b>All locations</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>All lengths</b>	<b>29</b>

- 3.5.2 The majority of these routes are 50 to 200 km in length, but they vary from 32 km (minimum distance for this audit), such as the Ardgartan Peninsula Circuit and the Gordon Way, to three paths/path networks of over 200 km – the South of Scotland Countryside Trails network (350 kms), Round the Forth Cycle Route (214 km, including on-road sections) and the Aberdeenshire Coastal Path (208 km, including gaps). The Borders Abbeys Way, Isle of Arran Coastal Way, Ardgartan Peninsula Circuit, Round the Forth Route and Dundee Green Circular are exceptional in offering circular routes, although some other routes link to provide for an out-and-return trip. The Annandale Way, South of Scotland Countryside Trails and some other routes include shorter loops, which are popular with day visitors.
- 3.5.3 Many of the routes provide important links to, or between, the designated LDRs and/or other longer distance routes. For example, St. Cuthbert's Way and the South of Scotland Countryside Trails link to the Pennine Way, Borders Abbeys Way and Southern Upland Way. Similarly, several routes offer opportunities for the future extension of specific LDRs, or, in combination, could provide a circular route.
- 3.5.4 While the 29 other longer distance routes have been established on the ground (as opposed to those in development, or at an advanced stage of planning; see s. 3.6), sections of some of these routes -
- are missing – for example, gaps in the Aberdeenshire Coastal Path and Deeside Way
  - are not well waymarked and require navigational skills – including parts of the Cowal Way
  - require up-grading to enhance surfaces and the user experience – including parts of the Clyde Walkway and the Formatine and Buchan Way
  - require re-routing to enhance users' safety and experience – for example, the Round the Forth Cycle Route between Blackness and Bo'ness.
- 3.5.5 Several routes have a distinctive theme, such as St. Cuthbert's Way, the Borders Abbeys Way and the Catechan Trail, and the Kintyre Way promotes awareness of local produce and the Annandale Way includes a sculpture trail. However, most routes have no unique theme and interpretive provision tends to be site-based and focuses on local aspects of landscape, wildlife or cultural interest, but without 'telling a story' throughout the length of the route. Despite its iconic title, the Rob Roy Way is not signed or effectively promoted as such, and comprises linked sections of several shorter, promoted routes (e.g. Callander to Strathyre Cycleway).

### *Route use and users*

- 3.5.6 All of the routes provide for walking, on a multitude of types of paths, tracks or minor roads, and on a variety of surfaces. In addition to routes specifically developed as cycleways or multi-use routes (e.g. Round the Forth Cycle Route, Deeside Way), the access legislation enables many sections of other routes to be used for responsible cycling and/or horse riding. The South of Scotland Countryside Trails and Trail of the 7 Lochs (Great Glen) are the only longer distance routes specifically developed and promoted for horse riding, while also providing for other users, subject to ground conditions. Improvements have extended the accessibility of sections of many routes for less able and disabled users, but sections of many routes may not comply with the requirements of the Disability Discrimination legislation and others are physically unsuitable for disabled users. Importantly, few routes have information advising on the range of uses they can support and under what circumstances.
- 3.5.7 Managers of only a few of the non-designated longer distance routes could provide estimates/guesstimates of the types and levels of use and users' expenditures. The available information indicates that -
- the Kintyre Way attracted some 496 all-way walkers in 2008, who spent £124,000
  - the River Ayr Way attracts around 120,000 trips/year - 30% of which are taken by multi-day, all-Way users and 70% by day visitors
  - 95% of trips on the Clyde Walkway are day trips and 5% are multi-day, all-route trips. The Falls of Clyde section attracts some 75,000 trips/year, but other sections only attract 25,-35,000 trips
  - 90% of users of the Forth-Clyde Canal and Union Canal Towpaths are on part-/day trips, 5% are on multi-day trips, and 5% are walking/cycling the whole length of the Canals
  - the Fife Coastal Path attracts around 480,-580,000 trips each year, with estimated expenditures of £24m-29m/year. 26% of these trips were by multi-day users and 72% by day visitors and local people.
- These data demonstrate that the highest proportion of use of these routes is by part-/day users, with only small proportions of users walking or cycling the whole route on a single trip. Estimates of users' expenditures are seldom available, but the data for the Kintyre Way and Fife Coastal Path show that these can be substantial.
- 3.5.8 Increasingly, longer distance routes are providing venues for charitable and challenge events. For example, 1,600 walkers were expected to take part in the Caledonian Challenge on the West Highland Way in 2008 and around 800 people ran and cycled sections of the Rob Roy Challenge in the same year. Mass events put pressures on the routes and their management, but may reduce pressures on other less robust paths and countryside.
- 3.5.9 As with the designated LDRs, the other longer distance routes provide a very varied user experience – ranging from easy to very challenging walking, off-road cycling and/ or riding, in coastal, urban fringe, estate, farmland, forests, moorlands and mountain landscapes, and including sections along shorelines, rivers, lochshores and canals.
- 3.5.10 The route managers recognise that many of the routes offer opportunities for market growth, especially in the off-road cycling, riding and events markets. They emphasise, however, the need for further investment to up-grade the routes to sustain increases in such uses.

### *Route management and volunteer support*

- 3.5.11 Most longer distance routes have been established and are maintained by the respective local authority(ies), a public body (e.g. Forestry Commission Scotland, British Waterways), or public sector-led partnerships – such as the former Scottish Borders Paths initiative, or Perth and Kinross Countryside Trust. Exceptions include –
- NCN and other cycle routes developed by Sustrans
  - management of the Kintyre Way by The Long & Winding Way Company Ltd. – a charitable company
  - the Ayr and Stranraer Rotary Clubs' roles in establishing the Ayrshire Coastal Path and its extension towards Stranraer
  - British Horse Society Scotland's and Tweeddale community groups' involvement in initiating the South of Scotland Countryside Trails, which were progressed under the auspices of the Southern Uplands Partnership
  - South Loch Ness Access Group's establishment of the Trail of the 7 Lochs riding route.
- 3.5.12 The Rob Roy Way has presented issues for the respective access authorities (i.e. Stirling and Perth and Kinross Councils, Loch Lomond and The Trossachs National Park Authority) and Forestry Commission Scotland, as this route has been initiated and promoted by private companies (i.e. I-Net Support, Walking Support), without consulting the access authorities or landowners. Consequently, the access authorities and FCS have come under pressure to assume responsibilities for maintaining this route – only some sections of which they had previously managed.
- 3.5.13 While public sector management authorities, partnerships or countryside trusts provide ranger coverage and/or maintain most of the longer distance routes, some routes have no, or a very limited, management commitment, including the Ayrshire Coastal Path, Isle of Arran Coastal Way and the Cowal Way. Volunteers support the management of several routes, including Sustrans' rangers on NCN routes (e.g. Clyde and Loch Lomond Cycleway, Round the Forth Cycle Route), canal societies' volunteers on the Forth-Clyde Canal and Union Canal towpaths, and community and horse rider volunteers on the South of Scotland Countryside Trails.

### *Route information, marketing and visitor services*

- 3.5.14 Most longer distance routes have some information leaflets, guidebooks and/or maps, published by the management bodies or commercial interests, and a few routes have promotional DVDs (e.g. Rob Roy Way). Most routes have dedicated websites (e.g. [www.caterantrail.org](http://www.caterantrail.org), [www.robroyway.com](http://www.robroyway.com)), or information on parent organisations' websites. Route websites are very variable in the quality of information available and their accessibility. There is no common shared portal website for the routes, although some websites provide information on several routes (e.g. *WalkingScotland* website, Long Distance Walkers Association's website).
- 3.5.15 Several routes are promoted through walking festivals, guided walks programmes and other events. Perth and Kinross Countryside Trust and the local tourist associations have agreed a marketing plan for the Catearan Trail, which is promoted through displays at the Outdoor Show (Birmingham NEC), shopping centres, etc..
- 3.5.16 Most routes have a range of available accommodation, but accommodation on remoter sections of the Dava Way and some other routes is less readily available. Only a few routes have baggage transfer, accommodation booking and/or activity holiday packages (e.g. Catearan Trail, Rob Roy Way, Kintyre Way).

### **3.6 Audit information on routes at an advanced stage of development or planning**

3.6.1 Eight longer distance routes have been identified (end-2009) as being at an advanced stage of development or planning, excluding the proposed extension of the Speyside Way. These potential additional routes are –

- Carrick Way - circular route: Girvan-Maybole- Barrhill
- Coalfield Cycle Route - Dalmellington to Muirkirk
- Weavers Trail - Muirkirk to Eaglesham
- Three Lochs Way - Balloch to Inveruglas
- King's Highway - Stirling to Drymen, by the Carse villages
- Oban to Ballachulish Cycle Route – proposed to continue to Fort William and comprise part of the proposed Caledonia Way
- Great Glen Canoe Trail - Banavie to Inverness
- Great Glen Cycle Trail - Fort William to Inverness.

These routes will add approximately 680 kms to the longer distance routes network and fill important gaps in the network. The Great Glen Canoe Trail will provide Scotland's first formal canoe trail.

3.6.2 Feasibility studies and proposals have been prepared for additional longer distance routes (e.g. longer distance walking and cycling routes through the Outer Hebrides, Strathbogie and Cabrach Way in the North East), but investigations suggest that funding and other constraints may restrict progress on such routes, at least in the short-term.

3.6.3 While the respective local and national park authorities and other public bodies (e.g. FCS, British Waterways) are playing important roles in the planning and development of most of the above routes, the initial proposals and development of several of these routes owes much to the enthusiasm and support of voluntary groups, for example -

- Ayrshire Walking Festivals Group's key roles in planning, negotiating and coordinating the development of the Carrick Way
- Helensburgh and District Access Forum's initiation and support for the Three Lochs Way
- Sustrans' involvement in the planning and development of the Oban to Ballachulish and Great Glen Cycle Routes
- Scottish Canoe Association's support for the Great Glen Canoe Trail.

3.6.4 As these routes are not yet fully developed, there are no, or very limited, publications or websites promoting these routes.

### **3.7 Audit information on virtual routes**

3.7.1 As explained previously, the term *virtual route* is used in this report to describe routes, which are outlined in books, magazine articles or websites, but are not specifically signed or waymarked on the ground, or formally recognised by the access authorities or national agencies. Sections of these routes may comprise existing hill tracks, core paths, or other paths – including sections of designated LDRs or other longer distance routes. For example, the Cape Wrath Trail and the Famous Highland Drove Walk both overlap part of the Great Glen Way. However, most of these routes comprise sections with limited infrastructure and may require navigational skills over areas of remote and challenging countryside and mountainous or moorland terrain. In the latter circumstances, to protect 'wild country' values and to retain routes offering a serious challenge to experienced walkers and others, this report recommends that such routes are not officially recognised, managed or marketed as longer distance routes, but may be promoted by authors and others for 'epic journeys'.

- 3.7.2 While a large number of virtual routes are/have been publicised in walking and other publications, six routes are identified in this report to exemplify better known virtual routes and/or some of the principal characteristics of such routes. These are -
- Scottish Coast to Coast - Oban to St. Andrews
  - Famous Highland Drove Walk - Glenbrittle to Crieff
  - Heart of Scotland 100 Mile Challenge Route - circular route in Highland Perthshire
  - Scottish Sea Kayak Trail - Gigha to the Summer Isles
  - Cape Wrath Trail - Fort William to Cape Wrath
  - Sutherland Trail - Lochinver to Tongue.
- 3.7.3 Collectively, these routes cover some 1,580 km over predominantly Highland mountain and moorland countryside, with the exception of the Scottish Coast to Coast – eastern parts of which run across lowland farmed countryside and estates in Fife and Perthshire, and the Scottish Sea Kayak Trail which comprises a sea passage. All the land-based routes are targeted at walkers, although sections may be suitable for mountain biking and/or horse riding.
- 3.7.4 None of the virtual routes are managed as longer distance routes, although sections are on existing managed paths. Similarly, they are not officially promoted, but are described in books and magazine articles, except for the Heart of Scotland 100 Mile Challenge Route, which is being promoted on a dedicated website as the Long Distance Walkers Association's principal challenge route for 2010. Once LDWA members and others have experienced and publicised this route, it is likely to be well-used by longer distance walkers and others.

### 3.8 Potential link routes

- 3.8.1 Almost **90 potential link routes** have been identified during this research (Table 3.5 and Maps Bi and ii). These are not longer distance routes, but have been identified to assist assessments of potential means of extending or linking longer distance routes to form a more rational and integrated longer distance route network. Many of these routes have similarities to longer distance routes – i.e. routes signed, managed and promoted for longer distance recreational and other active travel, but they do not meet the minimum length (32 km) for longer distance routes, as used in this study.
- 3.8.2 During the identification of potential link routes, access officers and others were invited to suggest routes for inclusion and these supplemented the routes identified by the consultant from guidebooks, leaflets, websites and other sources. However, the available budget and time for this study precluded the identification of all potential link routes. As with the longer distance routes, potential link routes with long sections over exposed terrain and few services, and which are more suited to users with high levels of navigational and outdoor skills, are mostly omitted from the audit.
- 3.8.3 The potential link routes include –
- coastal and lochshore paths – for example, Lochryan Coastal Path, Berwickshire Coastal Path and Loch Eck Shore Path
  - river valley routes – including the River Tyne Path and Water of Leith Walkway
  - Heritage Paths – such as the Minchmoor Track, Cauldstane Slap and Cadger's Yett
  - themed and promoted routes – such as the John Buchan Way and Isla Way
  - cycle routes – for example, the Penicuik to Musselburgh Cycle Route and Devilla Forest Cycle Path
  - riding routes – such as the Around the Cabrach route, between Dufftown and Rhynie.

- 3.8.4 These routes vary from relatively short routes – such as the Buchlyvie to Cobleland path (under 8 km) and Tannahill Walkway (9 km), to much longer routes – including Around the Cabrach (29 km), Edinburgh Waterfront (28 km) and the Dunkeld to Kirkmichael Path (23 km). While most routes are well-developed and promoted, sections of some are still in development (e.g. gaps in the Edinburgh Waterfront and Tay Trail). All are available for walking, but the extent to which many can be used for cycling, riding and disabled use is unclear and few have information on their suitability for such uses.
- 3.8.5 Many of the routes already provide links to a designated LDR or other longer distance routes. For example, the Kelvin Walkway/Cycleway links directly, or by short link paths, to/between the West Highland Way, Forth-Clyde Canal, Clyde Walkway and Glasgow to Loch Lomond Cycleway. Many of the cycle routes comprise mainly off-road sections of the National Cycle Network or other cycle routes (e.g. Kingdom of Fife Millennium Cycle Routes).
- 3.8.6 Most of the potential link routes are managed by the respective access authorities, Forestry Commission Scotland or Sustrans. Exceptions include the Rotary Club of Stranraer's involvement in developing the Lochryan Coastal Path, TRACKS' (The Rural Access Committee for Kinross-shire) development of the Loch Leven Heritage Trail, and Scotways' involvement in signing heritage paths and other rights of way which comprise many of the routes. Ranger services cover some of the more popular routes, including Sustrans Rangers on some of the cycle routes.
- 3.8.7 While some link routes have informative and well-presented leaflets (e.g. Loch Leven Heritage Trail, River Avon Heritage Trail) and/or websites and site-based interpretation, others have very little information or interpretation. Indeed, it has proved extremely difficult to obtain information on several of these routes and some of the website information is 'hidden' in parent organisations' websites, requiring lengthy searches.



Table 3.5 Summary of potential link routes

Route	Length (km)	Status	Principal Users	Start - Finish	Potential Links to LDRs	Management Partners	Websites	Comments
<b>Southern Scotland</b> (including Ayrshire)								
<b>Lochryan Coastal Path</b>	17.5	I.a. recognised route	walkers	Stranraer - Glenapp	Ayrshire Coastal Path	Rotary Club of Stranraer	<a href="http://www.rotary-ribi.org/clubs/committee.asp?ClubCtteeID=7802&amp;ClubID=1383">www.rotary-ribi.org/clubs/committee.asp?ClubCtteeID=7802&amp;ClubID=1383</a>	potential link to Southern Upland Way
<b>Glen Trool – Clatteringshaws – B796</b>		Part of NCN7	cyclists, walkers	Clachaneasy – B796	Southern Upland Way	FCS, Sustrans	<a href="http://www.sustrans.org.uk/map?searchtype=attractions&amp;searchkey=FC031">www.sustrans.org.uk/map?searchtype=attractions&amp;searchkey=FC031</a>	
<b>Barr – Loch Doon</b> (Dalmellington)	9.5	FCS Forest Drive	cyclists, walkers	Barr - Dalmellington	Proposed Carrick Way	FCS	<a href="http://www.forestry.gov.uk/website/ourwoods.nsf/LUWebDocsByKey/ScotlandDumfriesandGallowayNoForestGallowayForestParkCarrickLochDoonCarrickForestDrive">www.forestry.gov.uk/website/ourwoods.nsf/LUWebDocsByKey/ScotlandDumfriesandGallowayNoForestGallowayForestParkCarrickLochDoonCarrickForestDrive</a>	
<b>Sanquhar Walk</b>	28	I.a. recognised route	walkers	Muirkirk - Sanquhar	River Ayr Way, Southern Upland Way	East Ayrshire Council	<a href="http://www.ayrshirepaths.org.uk/find.htm">www.ayrshirepaths.org.uk/find.htm</a>	current quad bike damage
<b>Elvanfoot - Wanlockhead</b>	11	I.a. recognised route	walkers	Elvanfoot - Wanlockhead	Southern Upland Way	Dumfries & Galloway Council		exposed sections
<b>Lockerbie - Lochmaben</b>	6	proposed route	cyclists, walkers	Lockerbie – Lochmaben	Annandale Way	Dumfries & Galloway Council, SWestrans, Sustrans		
<b>Lugar Water Trail</b>	28	I.a. recognised route	cyclists, walkers	Cumnock - Mauchline	River Ayr Way, Coalfield Cycle Route	Dumfries House & Auchinleck Estates, E. Ayrshire Council		small link to be completed
<b>Irvine Valley Trail</b>	15	I.a. recognised route, NCN73 (part)	walkers	Hurlford - Darvel	NCN, Ayrshire Coastal Path/Cycleway	East Ayrshire Council	<a href="http://www.ayrshirepaths.org.uk/find.htm">www.ayrshirepaths.org.uk/find.htm</a>	
<b>Berwickshire Coastal Path</b> (parts of Nortrail/ N. Sea Cycle Route)	24	core path	walkers	Berwick - Coldingham	John Muir Way, St. Cuthbert's Way, Southern Upland Way	Scottish Borders Council	<a href="http://walking.visitscotland.com/walks/southscotland/berwickshire-coastal">http://walking.visitscotland.com/walks/southscotland/berwickshire-coastal</a>	potential part of Nortrail
<b>Deer Street</b>	28	heritage path, right of way	walkers	A68 (Forest Lodge) - Border	St. Cuthbert's Way, Southern Upland Way, Pennine Way. South of Scotland C'ntryside Trails	Scottish Borders Council	<a href="http://www.heritagepaths.co.uk/pathdetails.php?path=197">www.heritagepaths.co.uk/pathdetails.php?path=197</a>	
<b>Minchmoor Track</b>	16	heritage path, right of way	walkers	Traquair - Selkirk	Southern Upland Way	Scottish Borders Council	<a href="http://www.heritagepaths.co.uk/pathdetails.php?path=236">www.heritagepaths.co.uk/pathdetails.php?path=236</a>	
<b>John Buchan Way</b>	25+	I.a. recognised route	walkers, cyclists, horse riders	Peebles – Broughton (prop. extensions to Biggar/Lanark)	South of Scotland Countryside Trails	Scottish Borders, and S. Lanarkshire Councils	<a href="http://www.visitscottishborders.com/WhatToSee/Walking/Routes/john_buchan_way.aspx">www.visitscottishborders.com/WhatToSee/Walking/Routes/john_buchan_way.aspx</a>	extension part complete, key link to West Central Belt
<b>Crinan Canal Towpath</b>	14	I.a. recognised route	all abilities	Ardrishaig – Crinan	Kintyre Way	BWB	<a href="http://www.walkhighlands.co.uk/argyll/crinan-canal.shtml">www.walkhighlands.co.uk/argyll/crinan-canal.shtml</a>	
<b>Kilmory – Carrick</b>	9.5	FCS trail	cyclists, walkers	Kilmory – Carrick		FCS		

Note: Some information is incomplete, due to a lack of readily-available data



Table 3.5 Summary of potential link routes (continued)

Route	Length (kms)	Status	Principal Users	Start – Finish	Links to Longer Distance Routes	Management Partners	Websites	Comments
<b>Central Scotland</b> (including Argyll & Bute, Perth and Kinross and Angus)								
<b>Loch Eck Shore Trail</b>	14	FCS promoted route	cyclists, walkers	Benmore Gdns. – Glenbranter	Cowal Way	FCS		
<b>Arrochar – Tarbet Link Path</b>	2.25	I.a. recognised route	walkers	Arrochar – Tarbet (Loch Lomond)	West Loch Lomond Cycle Path, West Highland Way, Three Lochs Way	LLTTNPA, Argyll & Bute Council	<a href="http://www.walkhighlands.co.uk/lochlomond/arrochar-tarbet.shtml">www.walkhighlands.co.uk/lochlomond/arrochar-tarbet.shtml</a>	
<b>Nethan Walkway</b>	25	core path	walkers, cyclists	Crossford – Douglas	Clyde Walkway	South Lanarkshire Council		
<b>Avon Walkway</b>	20	I.a. recognised route	walkers, cyclists	Hamilton - Strathaven	Clyde Walkway	South Lanarkshire Council		part of Connect2 project
<b>Garnock Valley Cycleway</b>	29	I.a. recognised route, NCN 7 (part)	walkers, cyclists, riders	Irvine - Kilbirnie	Ayrshire Coastal Path/ Cycleway	North Lanarkshire Council	<a href="http://www.ayrshirepaths.org.uk/images/garnock_valley.pdf">www.ayrshirepaths.org.uk/images/garnock_valley.pdf</a>	
<b>Kilbirnie – Paisley Cycle Route</b> (Lochwinnoch Loop Line)	22	I.a recognised route, NCN7 (part)		Kilbirnie – Paisley	Clyde to Forth Cycle Route	Renfrewshire Council, Sustrans	<a href="http://www.routes2ride.org.uk/scotland/routes2ride/lochwinnoch_loop_line/">www.routes2ride.org.uk/scotland/routes2ride/lochwinnoch_loop_line/</a>	potential links to Ayrshire Coastal Path/Cycleway
<b>Tannahill Walkway</b>	9	I.a recognised route	walkers	Paisley- Johnstone	Clyde to Forth Cycle Route	Renfrewshire Council	<a href="http://www.renfrewshire.gov.uk/ilwwcm/publicising.nsf/AttachmentsByTitle/pt-as-JohnstoneToPaisley.pdf/\$FILE/pt-as-JohnstoneToPaisley.pdf">www.renfrewshire.gov.uk/ilwwcm/publicising.nsf/AttachmentsByTitle/pt-as-JohnstoneToPaisley.pdf/\$FILE/pt-as-JohnstoneToPaisley.pdf</a>	
<b>Cunninghame Cycleway</b>	28	I.a. recognised route; NCN73 (part)	walkers, cyclists, riders	Kilmarnock – Ardrossan	NCN 7, Ayrshire Coast Path/Cycleway	East Ayrshire and North Ayrshire Councils, Sustrans	<a href="http://www.ayrshirepaths.org.uk/images/cunninghamecycleway.pdf">www.ayrshirepaths.org.uk/images/cunninghamecycleway.pdf</a>	
<b>Ardrossan – West Kilbride Cycle Route</b>		I.a recognised route, NCN 75 (part)	cyclists, walkers, riders	Ardrossan – West Kilbride	Ayrshire Coastal Path/ Cycleway	North Ayrshire Council, Sustrans	<a href="http://www.sustrans.org.uk/map?searchtype=search&amp;searchkey=Ardrossan, North Ayrshire">www.sustrans.org.uk/map?searchtype=search&amp;searchkey=Ardrossan, North Ayrshire</a>	
<b>Inverclyde Coastal Path/Cycle Route</b>	24	core path, NCN 75 (part)	walkers, cyclists	Inverkip – Port Glasgow	Ayrshire Coastal Path/ Cycleway, Clyde to Forth Cycle Route	Inverclyde Council, Clyde Muirshiel RP, Ardgowan Estates	<a href="http://www.inverclyde.gov.uk">www.inverclyde.gov.uk</a> , <a href="http://www.clydemuirshiel.co.uk">www.clydemuirshiel.co.uk</a>	
<b>Cornalees – Auchenbothie</b>	12	core path	walkers, cyclists	Cornalees – Auchenbothie	Clyde to Forth Cycle Route	Inverclyde Council, Clyde Muirshiel RP	<a href="http://www.inverclyde.gov.uk">www.inverclyde.gov.uk</a>	requires improvements
<b>Kelvin Walkway / Cycleway</b>	14	I.a. recognised route	walkers, cyclists	Milngavie – Glasgow (Partick)	West Highland Way, Forth-Clyde Canal, Clyde Walkway, Glasgow to Loch Lomond Cycleway	E. Dunbartonshire and Glasgow City Councils		
<b>Strathkelvin Railway Path</b>	17/21.5	core path	walkers, cyclists	Strathblane – Moodiesburn (+ West Highland Way link)	West Highland Way, Forth-Clyde Canal Towpath	Stirling and East Dunbartonshire Councils, Sustrans	<a href="http://www.eastdunbarton.gov.uk">www.eastdunbarton.gov.uk</a>	consultations on Killearn-Strathblane link
<b>Buchlyvie – Cobleland</b>	7.5	I.a. recognised route	cyclists, walkers,	Buchlyvie – Cobleland	King's Highway (proposed)	Stirling Council, LLTTNPA		

Note: Some information is incomplete, due to a lack of readily-available data

Table 3.5 Summary of potential link routes (continued)

Route	Length (kms)	Status	Principal Users	Start – Finish	Links to Longer Distance Routes	Management Partners	Websites	Comments
<b>Old Military Road:</b>		heritage path, right of way	Walkers, cyclists	Inversnaid - Stronachlachar	West Highland Way, Three Lochs Way (ferry)	LLTPA, Great Trossachs Forest		part of Inversnaid – Callander route
<b>Balloch to Aberfoyle Cycle Link Route</b>		NCN7 (part)	cyclists	Balloch – Aberfoyle	NCN7, Rob Roy Way, Three Lochs Way, West L. Lomond Cycle Route	LLTNPA, FCS		
<b>Milton (Aberfoyle) - Rowardennan</b>		FCS promoted routes (2)	Walkers, cyclists (part)	Milton- Kinlochard; L. Dhu - Rowardennan	West Highland Way, Rob Roy Way (Aberfoyle)	FCS		two forest paths linked by public or forest roads
<b>North Calder Heritage Trail</b>	16	I.a. recognised route, NCN75 (part)	walkers	Summerlee- Hillend Reservoir	Clyde to Forth Cycle Route	North Lanarkshire Council, CSFT	<a href="http://www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=6903">www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=6903</a>	
<b>Stirling to Callander Cycle Route</b>	26	proposed route, NCN (part)	cyclists, walkers, riders	Stirling - Callander	Round the Forth Route (NCN 76), Rob Roy Way, King's Highway (proposed)	Stirling Council, Sustrans		
<b>Brig O'Turk - Balquhider - Glen Dochart</b>	24.5	rights of way, heritage path	walkers	Brig O'Turk - Balquhider (by Glen Finglas) – Glen Dochart	Rob Roy Way	LLTNPA, Stirling Council, Woodland Trust Scotland	<a href="http://www.walkhighlands.co.uk/lochlomond/balquhider-turk.shtml">www.walkhighlands.co.uk/lochlomond/balquhider-turk.shtml</a> , <a href="http://www.heritagepaths.co.uk/pathdetails.php?path=228">www.heritagepaths.co.uk/pathdetails.php?path=228</a>	wet and exposed in places
<b>Loch Katrine – Callander (Bohastle)</b>		proposed route	walkers, cyclists	Loch Katrine – Brig O'Turk- Callander	Rob Roy Way	LLTNPA, Stirling Council, Woodland Trust Scotland, FCS		part developed, part planned
<b>Killin - Tyndrum Link Route</b>		proposed route	walkers, cyclists	Killin – Tyndrum	Rob Roy Way, West Highland Way, Famous Highland Drove Walk	LLTNPA, Stirling and Perth & Kinross Councils		LLTNPA proposal
<b>River Avon Heritage Trail</b>	20	I.a. recognised route	walkers, cyclists	Avonbridge – Linlithgow	Forth-Clyde Canal/Union Canal Towpaths	Falkirk and West Lothian Councils, CSFT	<a href="http://www.falkirk.gov.uk/services/development/planning_and_environment/outdoor_access/PDFs/river_avon_heritage_trail.pdf">www.falkirk.gov.uk/services/development/planning_and_environment/outdoor_access/PDFs/river_avon_heritage_trail.pdf</a> <a href="http://www.falkirk.gov.uk/goto/paths.htm">www.falkirk.gov.uk/goto/paths.htm</a>	proposed extensions to Slammanan & Birkhill.NCN76)
<b>Newbridge to South Queensferry Cycle Route</b>		I.a. recognised route	cyclists, walkers, riders	Newbridge – S. Queensferry	Round the Forth Cycle Route	City of Edinburgh Council		
<b>Roseburn to Granton Cycle Route</b>		I.a. recognised route	all abilities	Newbridge – S. Queensferry	Round the Forth Cycle Route	City of Edinburgh Council		
<b>River Almond Path</b>	14.5	I.a. recognised route, core path	walkers, cyclists (sections)	Almondell & Calderwood Country Park - Cramond	Round the Forth Route, Forth-Clyde/Union Canal Towpaths	City of Edinburgh and West Lothian Councils	<a href="http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/internet/Attachments/Internet/Leisure/Parks_and_recreation/Core_Paths_Final_050608.pdf">www.edinburgh.gov.uk/internet/Attachments/Internet/Leisure/Parks_and_recreation/Core_Paths_Final_050608.pdf</a>	gaps in route
<b>Water of Leith Walkway</b>	19	I.a. recognised route, NCN75 (part), core path	walkers, cyclists	Balerno - Leith	Forth-Clyde/Union Canals, Clyde to Forth Cycle Route, Round the Forth Route	Edinburgh City Council, Water of Leith Conservation Trust, Sustrans	<a href="http://www.waterofleith.org.uk/storage/downloads/W%20of%20L%20walkway%20map.pdf">www.waterofleith.org.uk/storage/downloads/W%20of%20L%20walkway%20map.pdf</a>	

Note: Some information is incomplete, due to a lack of readily-available data

Table 3.5 Summary of potential link routes (continued)

Route	Length (kms)	Status	Principal Users	Start – Finish	Links to Longer Distance Routes	Management Partners	Websites	Comments
<b>Innocent Railway Path</b>	12	I.a. recognised route, NCN1 (part), core path	all abilities	Edinburgh – Newcraighall/ Musselburgh	Round the Forth Route, John Muir Way	Edinburgh City Council, Sustrans	<a href="http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/internet/Attachments/Internet/Transport/Walking_and_cycling/Exploring_Edinburgh_car-free/East_Edinburgh.pdf">http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/internet/Attachments/Internet/Transport/Walking_and_cycling/Exploring_Edinburgh_car-free/East_Edinburgh.pdf</a>	
<b>Edinburgh Waterfront</b> (parts of Nortrail/N. Sea Cycle Route)	28	I.a. recognised/ core path	all abilities	Joppa-Cramond - South Queensferry	Round the Forth Route, John Muir Way, Fife Coastal Path	Edinburgh City Council, Sustrans	<a href="http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/internet/Leisure/Parks_and_recreation/CEC_the_edinburgh_waterfont_promenade">www.edinburgh.gov.uk/internet/Leisure/Parks_and_recreation/CEC_the_edinburgh_waterfont_promenade</a>	part developed
<b>Balerno - Flotterstone</b>		I.a. recognised path, right of way	walkers, cyclists	Balerno - Flotterstone	Clyde to Forth Cycle Route	Edinburgh City and Midlothian Councils, Pentland Hills Regional Park	<a href="http://download.edinburgh.gov.uk/Pentlands/Cycling_in_the_Pentland_Hills_leaflet.pdf">http://download.edinburgh.gov.uk/Pentlands/Cycling_in_the_Pentland_Hills_leaflet.pdf</a>	
<b>Cauldstone Slap</b>		heritage path, right of way	walkers	A70 – West Linton	South of Scotland Countryside Trails	West Lothian and Scottish Borders Councils, Pentland Hills Regional Park	<a href="http://www.heritagepaths.co.uk/pathdetails.php?path=19">www.heritagepaths.co.uk/pathdetails.php?path=19</a> ; <a href="http://download.edinburgh.gov.uk/Pentlands/Cycling_in_the_Pentland_Hills_leaflet.pdf">http://download.edinburgh.gov.uk/Pentlands/Cycling_in_the_Pentland_Hills_leaflet.pdf</a>	
<b>Bore Stane Path</b>	10.5	heritage path, right of way	walkers, cyclists	A70 (Beechgrove Farm) - Carlops		Edinburgh City and Midlothian Councils, Pentland Hills Regional Park	<a href="http://www.heritagepaths.co.uk/pathdetails.php?path=84">www.heritagepaths.co.uk/pathdetails.php?path=84</a> <a href="http://download.edinburgh.gov.uk/Pentlands/Cycling_in_the_Pentland_Hills_leaflet.pdf">http://download.edinburgh.gov.uk/Pentlands/Cycling_in_the_Pentland_Hills_leaflet.pdf</a>	
<b>Mosshouses - Carcant</b>		core paths/ rights of way	walkers	Mosshouses (nr. Leadburn) – Carcant (Heriot)		Midlothian and Scottish Borders Councils		
<b>Penicuik to Musselburgh Walkway/Cycle Way</b> (+ Dalkeith link)	17 (3)	I.a. recognised route, NCN73 (part)	all abilities		John Muir Way, North Sea Cycle Route, Round the Forth Cycle Route	Midlothian and East Lothian Councils, Sustrans	<a href="http://www.midlothian.gov.uk/images/walks/Walk10PenicuiktoMusselburghCycleWay.pdf">www.midlothian.gov.uk/images/walks/Walk10PenicuiktoMusselburghCycleWay.pdf</a>	
<b>Ormiston to Coast</b>		core paths	walkers, cyclists	Ormiston – Port Seton	John Muir Way	East Lothian Council		proposed path linking core paths
<b>Pencaitland Railway Path</b>	11	I.a. recognised route, core path	all abilities	Crossgatehall – West Saltoun		East Lothian Council	<a href="http://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/downloads/Map_side1.pdf">http://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/downloads/Map_side1.pdf</a>	potential extension to Gifford
<b>Longniddry - Haddington Railway Path</b>	7	I.a. recognised route, core path	all abilities	Longniddry-Haddington	John Muir Way	East Lothian Council	<a href="http://www.haddingtoncc.org.uk/pdf/files/HaddingtonWalks.pdf">www.haddingtoncc.org.uk/pdf/files/HaddingtonWalks.pdf</a>	
<b>Haddington to Coast</b>		Core paths	walkers	Gullane - Haddington	John Muir Way	East Lothian Council		proposed path linking core paths
<b>River Tyne Path</b>		core paths	walkers, cyclists(part)	Ormiston – East Linton	John Muir Way	East Lothian Council		proposed path linking core paths
<b>Hillfoot Villages Path</b>		core paths	Walkers	Gifford – Herring Road		East Lothian Council		proposed path linking core paths

Note: Some information is incomplete, due to a lack of readily-available data

Table 3.5 Summary of potential link routes (continued)

Route	Length (kms)	Status	Principal Users	Start – Finish	Links to Longer Distance Routes	Management Partners	Websites	Comments
<b>Gifford - Carfraemill</b>		heritage path, core paths	walkers	Gifford – Carfraemill (+ Haddington)		East Lothian and Scottish Borders Councils		extension of heritage path to Haddington, unpromoted
<b>Stenton - Duns</b>	36	heritage path, right of way	walkers	Stenton - Duns	Southern Upland Way	East Lothian and Scottish Borders Councils		unpromoted path
<b>Herring Road</b>	45	heritage path, right of way	walkers	Spott (Dunbar)-Lauder	John Muir Way, Southern Upland Way	East Lothian Council	<a href="http://www.heritagepaths.co.uk/pathdetails.php?path=1">www.heritagepaths.co.uk/pathdetails.php?path=1</a>	unpromoted path
<b>Cadger's Yett</b>	12	heritage path, right of way	walkers	Dollar – Auchterarder		Clackmannanshire Council	<a href="http://www.heritagepaths.co.uk/pathdetails.php?path=91">www.heritagepaths.co.uk/pathdetails.php?path=91</a>	
<b>Devon Way</b>	17.5	i.a. recognised route, core path	walkers, cyclists, riders	Dollar – Sauchie (Alloa)	Round the Forth Cycle Route	Clackmannanshire Council	<a href="http://walking.visitscotland.com/walks/entralscotland/213027">http://walking.visitscotland.com/walks/entralscotland/213027</a>	needs improvements
<b>West Fife Cycle Way</b>	17.5	NCN764, core path	cyclists, walkers	Dunfermline – Alloa	Round the Forth Cycle Route	Clackmannanshire and Fife Councils, Sustrans	<a href="http://www.routes2ride.co.uk/scotland/routes2ride/west_fife_way_clackmannan_dunfermline/#map">www.routes2ride.co.uk/scotland/routes2ride/west_fife_way_clackmannan_dunfermline/#map</a>	part to be developed (Cambus)
<b>Devilla Forest (Kincardine-West Fife Cycle Way) Cycle Path</b>		Kingdom of Fife Millennium Cycleway	cyclists, walkers	Kincardine – West Fife Cycle Way	Round the Forth Route	Fife Council		
<b>Loch Leven Heritage Trail</b>	12.5 +	core path	all abilities	Kinross (around Loch Leven)		TRACKS, Perth & Kinross Council	<a href="http://www.pkc.gov.uk/NR/rdonlyres/1612DE1D-5E5E-4FD9-B88E-EC2178A1D010/0/HeritageTrailLeaflet24309.pdf">www.pkc.gov.uk/NR/rdonlyres/1612DE1D-5E5E-4FD9-B88E-EC2178A1D010/0/HeritageTrailLeaflet24309.pdf</a>	Vane Farm - Kinross section to be developed
<b>Pitmedden Forest (Strathmiglo - Newburgh) Cycle Route</b>	12.5	Kingdom of Fife Millennium Cycleway	cyclists, walkers	Strathmiglo - Newburgh	Fife Coastal Path	Fife Council	<a href="http://www.fifedirect.org.uk/fife-cycleways/index.cfm?fuseaction=routedisplay&amp;RouteID=EC834F1D-2A5F-36CB-9B4FE7ACD8398819&amp;MapID=10">www.fifedirect.org.uk/fife-cycleways/index.cfm?fuseaction=routedisplay&amp;RouteID=EC834F1D-2A5F-36CB-9B4FE7ACD8398819&amp;MapID=10</a>	
<b>Tay Trail</b> (parts of Nortrail/N. Sea Cycle Route)		proposed route	cyclists, walkers	Tentsmuir – Arbroath via Perth & Dundee	Fife Coastal Path, Dundee Green Circular, various NCN routes, Nortrail, North Sea Cycle Route	Dundee City, Fife and Angus Councils, PKCT, FCCT, FCS		support for proposal, not developed
<b>Dundee to Arbroath Cycle Route</b> (parts of Nortrail/N. Sea Cycle Route)	34	i.a. recognised route	cyclists, walkers	Dundee – Arbroath	Fife Coastal Path (via Tay Bridge), Dundee Green Circular	Dundee City and Angus Councils, Sustrans	<a href="http://www.sustrans.org.uk/assets/files/scotland/Dundee_to_Arbroath.pdf">www.sustrans.org.uk/assets/files/scotland/Dundee_to_Arbroath.pdf</a>	
<b>Old Route</b> (Harrietfield – Amulree)	10	heritage path, core path	walkers	Harrietfield – Amulree	Rob Roy Way (Amulree link)	Perth & Kinross Council	<a href="http://www.heritagepaths.co.uk/pathdetails.php?path=33">www.heritagepaths.co.uk/pathdetails.php?path=33</a>	
<b>Dunkeld – Kirkmichael</b>	23	route in development	walkers	Dunkeld - Kirkmichael	Cateran Trail, part of Heart of Scotland 100 mile Challenge route	Perth and Kinross Council, PKCT, private estates		advanced planning stage

Note: Some information is incomplete, due to a lack of readily-available data

Table 3.5 Summary of potential link routes (continued)

Route	Length (kms)	Status	Principal Users	Start – Finish	Links to Longer Distance Routes	Management Partners	Websites	Comments
<b>Kirkmichael - Pitlochry</b>	17	route in development	walkers	Kirkmichael – Pitlochry	Rob Roy Way, Cateran Trail, Famous Highland Drove Walk	Perth and Kinross Council, PKCT		
<b>Enochdhu – Blair Atholl</b> (via Glen Fearnach)	24	right of way	walkers	Enochdhu – Blair Atholl	Cateran Trail, part of Heart of Scotland 100 mile Challenge Route, Famous Highland Drove Walk	Perth and Kinross Council, PKCT		early stages of development
<b>Kirk Road</b> (Innerwick to Dall)	10	heritage path, right of way	walkers	Innerwick to Dall (L. Rannoch)		Perth & Kinross Council	<a href="http://www.heritagepaths.co.uk/pathdetails.php?path=53">www.heritagepaths.co.uk/pathdetails.php?path=53</a>	
<b>Rannoch Moor Track</b>	19	heritage path, right of way	walkers, cyclists	Glencoe (Kingshouse) – Rannoch Station	West Highland Way, Famous Highland Drove Walk	Perth & Kinross and Highland Councils	<a href="http://www.heritagepaths.co.uk/pathdetails.php?path=188">http://www.heritagepaths.co.uk/pathdetails.php?path=188</a>	
<b>Road to the Isles</b>	20+	heritage path, right of way	walkers, cyclists	Rannoch Station – Spean Bridge	Famous Highland Drove Walk	Perth & Kinross and Highland Councils	<a href="http://www.heritagepaths.co.uk/pathdetails.php?path=186">www.heritagepaths.co.uk/pathdetails.php?path=186</a>	
<b>Firmounth</b>	18	heritage path, right of way	walkers	Taraside - Dinnet	Deeside Way	Aberdeenshire and Angus Councils, Cairngorms NPA	<a href="http://www.heritagepaths.co.uk/pathdetails.php?path=126">www.heritagepaths.co.uk/pathdetails.php?path=126</a>	exposed, unpromoted path
<b>Fungle</b>	14	heritage path, right of way	walkers	Taraside - Aboyne	Deeside Way	Aberdeenshire and Angus Councils, Cairngorms NPA	<a href="http://www.heritagepaths.co.uk/pathdetails.php?path=127">www.heritagepaths.co.uk/pathdetails.php?path=127</a>	unpromoted path
<b>Boddin - Montrose</b>	9.5		walkers	Boddin Point – Montrose	Aberdeenshire Coastal Path	Angus Council		part beach walking
<b>North East Scotland and the Highlands and Islands</b>								
<b>River Don Path</b>	8	I.a. recognised route in development	walkers, cyclists, riders	Dyce to Aberdeen City Centre	Deeside Way, Formatine & Buchan Way, Aberdeen's North Sea Trail	Aberdeen City Council	-	
<b>Isla Way</b> (+ links to Speyside Way)	21	I.a. recognised route	walkers, cyclists	Dufftown - Keith	Potential link to Speyside Way	Moray Council	<a href="http://www.morayways.org.uk/isla-way.asp">www.morayways.org.uk/isla-way.asp</a>	
<b>Around the Cabrach</b>	29	access group initiative	riders, walkers	Suie – Glacks of Balloch (A941) nr. Dufftown	Speyside Way spur to Tomintoul	Moray Equestrian Access Group	<a href="http://www.meag.org.uk/docs/BT%20Cabrach.pdf">www.meag.org.uk/docs/BT%20Cabrach.pdf</a>	
<b>Calvine – Dalwhinnie Cycle Route</b>	27	I.a. recognised route, NCN 1 (part)	cyclists, walkers	Calvine – Dalwhinnie		Sustrans, Highland and Perth & Kinross Councils	<a href="http://www.sustrans.org.uk/map?searchtype=search&amp;searchkey=Calvine, Perth and Kinross">www.sustrans.org.uk/map?searchtype=search&amp;searchkey=Calvine, Perth and Kinross</a>	
<b>Badenoch Way</b>	16	I.a. recognised route, core path	walkers	Aviemore – Insh Marshes	Speyside Way	Highland Council, Cairngorms NPA	<a href="http://walking.visitscotland.com/walks/cairngorms/badenoch-way">http://walking.visitscotland.com/walks/cairngorms/badenoch-way</a>	likely to be replaced by Speyside Way

Note: Some information is incomplete, due to a lack of readily-available data

Table 3.5 Summary of potential link routes (continued)

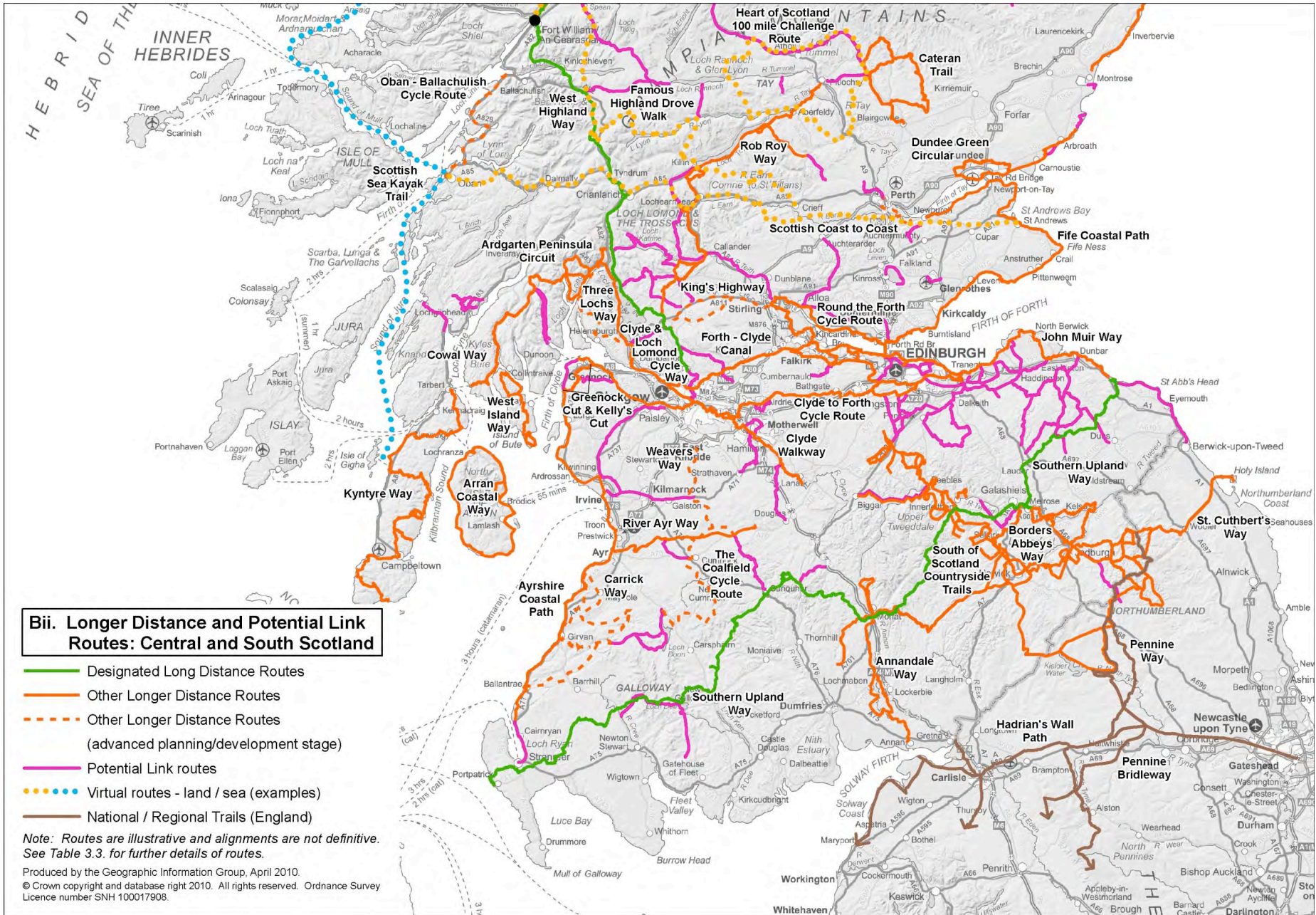
Route	Length (kms)	Status	Principal Users	Start – Finish	Links to Longer Distance Routes	Management Partners	Websites	Comments
<b>Aviemore to Slochd Cycle Route</b>	24	I.a. recognised route, NCN7 (part)	cyclists, walkers	Aviemore – Slochd	Speyside Way	Highland Council, Cairngorms NPA, Scottish Executive, Sustrans	<a href="http://www.sustrans.org.uk/assets/files/scotland/Aviemore_to_Slochdb.pdf">www.sustrans.org.uk/assets/files/scotland/Aviemore_to_Slochdb.pdf</a>	part of Lochs and Glens Cycle Route
<b>Dingwall to Strathpeffer and Garve</b>	17	rights of way	walkers			Highland Council	<a href="http://www.walkhighlands.co.uk/maps/map4_18ln.shtml">www.walkhighlands.co.uk/maps/map4_18ln.shtml</a>	
<b>Avoch To Cromarty</b>	18	I.a. recognised route	walkers	Avoch – Cromarty		Highland Council	<a href="http://www.walkhighlands.co.uk/lochness/Cromartycoast.shtml">www.walkhighlands.co.uk/lochness/Cromartycoast.shtml</a> ; <a href="http://www.walking.visitscotland.com/walks/northhighlands/214193">www.walking.visitscotland.com/walks/northhighlands/214193</a>	shore section not accessible at high tide
<b>Brora to Golspie Coastal Walk</b>	11	I.a. recognised route	walkers	Brora-Golspie		Highland Council	<a href="http://www.walkhighlands.co.uk/sutherland/brora-golspie.shtml">www.walkhighlands.co.uk/sutherland/brora-golspie.shtml</a>	
<b>Applecross Coffin Road</b>	13	heritage path, right of way	walkers	Applecross-Inverbain		Highland Council	<a href="http://www.heritagepaths.co.uk/pathdetails.php?path=148">www.heritagepaths.co.uk/pathdetails.php?path=148</a>	
<b>Diabeg - Redpoint</b>	11	right of way	walkers	Diabeg (Torridon) – Redpoint		Highland Council	<a href="http://www.visitscottishheartlands.com/frames/walkingwild/index.htm">www.visitscottishheartlands.com/frames/walkingwild/index.htm</a> , <a href="http://walking.visitscotland.com/walks/northhighlands/212836">http://walking.visitscotland.com/walks/northhighlands/212836</a>	
<b>Sandwood Bay</b>	6.5	right of way	walkers	Blairmore (Kinlochbervie) – Sandwood Bay	Cape Wrath Trail	Highland Council, John Muir Trust	<a href="http://www.walking.visitscotland.com/walks/northhighlands/214264">www.walking.visitscotland.com/walks/northhighlands/214264</a>	

Note: Some information is incomplete, due to a lack of readily-available data.









**Bii. Longer Distance and Potential Link Routes: Central and South Scotland**

- Designated Long Distance Routes
- Other Longer Distance Routes
- - - Other Longer Distance Routes (advanced planning/development stage)
- Potential Link routes
- Virtual routes - land / sea (examples)
- National / Regional Trails (England)

*Note: Routes are illustrative and alignments are not definitive. See Table 3.3. for further details of routes.*

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## 4. ASSESSMENT OF THE ROUTE NETWORK

### 4.1 Overview assessment of longer distance routes

4.1.1 The longer distance route audit and maps (s. 3), desk research, additional information from route managers and interest groups, and feed-back from the consultative workshop, contributed towards a brief assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the current longer distance route network (Table 4.1) and of future opportunities and threats relating to the network (Table 4.2, overleaf). This SWOT assessment focussed on the provision of longer distance routes and aspects of their planning, marketing, management and stakeholder involvement.

Table 4.1 Longer distance routes: summary of strengths and weaknesses

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<b>Longer Distance Route Network and Individual Routes</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ recognition of the importance of longer distance routes for recreation, tourism and active travel</li> <li>+ longer distance routes available throughout much of Scotland</li> <li>+ high quality of many routes, especially designated LDRs</li> <li>+ safe off-road recreation and travel on many routes</li> <li>+ varied and attractive landscapes and heritage interests</li> <li>+ provision for walkers on all routes</li> <li>+ provision for cyclists on many routes (+ NCN routes)</li> <li>+ up-grading of many routes for other users, including disabled users</li> <li>+ some routes have good access to public transport services</li> <li>+ quality visitor services and attractions linked to many routes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– lack of a clear vision for longer distance routes network and its target markets</li> <li>– few/no routes in the Highlands and Northern and Western Isles</li> <li>– no integrated route network and poor linkages between routes</li> <li>– gaps in sections of key routes (e.g. several coastal paths)</li> <li>– sections with poor surfaces, waterlogging, barriers, etc.</li> <li>– busy road sections of routes and other potential hazards</li> <li>– sections through unattractive landscapes and urban areas</li> <li>– sections often unsuitable for cycling, riding and disabled use</li> <li>– provision for cycling, riding and disabled use is often uncertain</li> <li>– often poor linkages with public transport</li> <li>– few services on extensive sections of some routes</li> </ul>
<b>Route Markets, Marketing and Interpretation</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ strong and growing markets for better known routes</li> <li>+ some routes well-known with high levels of public appeal</li> <li>+ good market and expenditure data for a few routes</li> <li>+ a few routes have effective marketing plans, promotional programmes and events</li> <li>+ high quality published and website information for some routes</li> <li>+ some routes have strong themes</li> <li>+ effective interpretation on some routes (+ sculptures, etc.)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– low levels of use and awareness of many routes</li> <li>– lower levels of public appeal of some routes</li> <li>– market research for network/routes generally poor and dated</li> <li>– no central database, websites or other information on all routes</li> <li>– low profile of many routes and lack of effective/joint marketing</li> <li>– information often difficult to access or inadequate; in particular, suitability/accessibility for cycling, riding and disabled use</li> <li>– few routes with a distinctive theme</li> <li>– interpretation is often lacklustre and lacks focus</li> </ul>
<b>Route Planning, Management and Funding</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ coordinated and effective planning and management frameworks for most designated LDRs and some other routes</li> <li>+ effective partnerships and strong commitment of many management organisations</li> <li>+ dedicated and highly skilled and experienced staff</li> <li>+ some core path plans and other plans provide strategic framework for protecting/developing longer distance routes</li> <li>+ good examples of routes being integrated within wider greenspace, active travel and other initiatives</li> <li>+ continuing development and maintenance funding for routes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– lack of integrated, strategic approach to route network</li> <li>– some partnerships under pressure/insecure (e.g. Speyside Way)</li> <li>– lack of sustained commitment and ‘champions’ for many routes</li> <li>– focus of staff in recent years has been on core paths</li> <li>– longer distance routes often omitted from core path plans and given low priority in paths management</li> <li>– longer distance routes often planned and managed in isolation from wider open space, recreation and greenspace networks</li> <li>– increasing difficulties in securing and sustaining funding for route development, up-grading and maintenance</li> </ul>
<b>Stakeholder Involvement and Support</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ vital contributions of communities and other voluntary groups to route planning, development and/or management</li> <li>+ businesses recognising benefits and providing user services</li> <li>+ landowners and managers supporting some routes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– difficulties of attracting/sustaining voluntary support in rural areas</li> <li>– difficulties for community and other voluntary groups (e.g. Sustrans, Rotary Clubs) in funding maintenance of routes</li> <li>– business support is often ignored and seldom fully developed</li> <li>– development or extension of routes may be delayed/opposed by landowners or managers</li> </ul>

Table 4.2 Longer distance routes: summary of opportunities and threats

OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<b>Longer Distance Route Network and Individual Routes</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ provision of a world-class network of routes, which enhance Scotland's tourism offer and satisfy community needs</li> <li>+ fill gaps, link routes and create looped routes - extending opportunities for recreation and active travel</li> <li>+ increase multi-use provision on existing routes</li> <li>+ opportunities to create new route networks – especially for horse riders and paddle sports</li> <li>+ agree standards, enhance the quality and establish a quality assurance scheme for longer distance routes</li> <li>+ widen range of uses by upgrading routes and removing barriers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– <i>ad hoc</i> approaches to routes result in fragmented network and fail to optimise past/current investment</li> <li>– uncoordinated approaches fail to meet policy aims and support recreation and active travel</li> <li>– inconsistent/poor quality routes fail to attract, or deter, use by communities and visitors</li> <li>– routes fail to meet users' needs and expectations – especially cyclists, riders and less able users</li> </ul>
<b>Route Markets, Marketing and Interpretation</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ strengthen market research and agree target markets for routes</li> <li>+ develop and promote a strong brand for longer distance routes</li> <li>+ provide more effective marketing and information provision for routes through joint marketing initiatives (e.g. Web portal)</li> <li>+ encourage business support for marketing</li> <li>+ 'showcasing' of destinations, attractions, produce, etc.</li> <li>+ strengthen themes and differentiation of routes</li> <li>+ more active and innovative promotion of routes</li> <li>+ strengthen interpretation of routes (e.g. use of art, events, etc.)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– lack of targeted, joined-up and brand- based marketing of routes</li> <li>– poor market awareness, growth and returns from investment</li> <li>– inadequate joint marketing of, and information for, routes</li> <li>– issues of provision, quality and access to information on some routes, resulting in relatively low levels of use</li> <li>– failure to meet needs for information on availability and suitability of routes for cycling, riding and disabled use</li> <li>– mediocrity and 'sameness' of interpretation on some routes</li> </ul>
<b>Route Planning, Management and Funding</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ develop a database of longer distance routes and other paths to assist route planning and marketing</li> <li>+ recognition of, and investment in, longer distance routes as a national asset for recreation, sport, tourism, travel, health, etc.</li> <li>+ more integrated approaches to longer distance routes in core path plans and paths management</li> <li>+ inclusion of, and greater priority for, longer distance routes in land use, transport, greenspace and other plans/programmes</li> <li>+ link longer distance routes to national programmes to promote health, cycling, active travel, etc.</li> <li>+ increased and more effective funding of longer distance routes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– investments based on political/interest group advocacy and available funding, rather than market needs and value for money</li> <li>– lack of recognition at national and local scales of social, economic and environmental benefits of longer distance routes</li> <li>– priority for core paths leading to deterioration of longer distance routes</li> <li>– lack of funding resulting in failure to meet standards or closures</li> </ul>
<b>Stakeholder Involvement and Support</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ enhanced partnerships for route planning and management, involving communities, businesses and voluntary sector</li> <li>+ support from volunteers for route monitoring and rangering</li> <li>+ enhanced business support for websites, users services, etc.</li> <li>+ enhanced recognition of benefits of well-managed routes and support from land managers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– lack of support for routes, due to failures to engage wider community and interests</li> <li>– failure to take advantage of potential voluntary support for route managers and management</li> <li>– conservation and land management issues resulting from inadequate route maintenance and management</li> </ul>

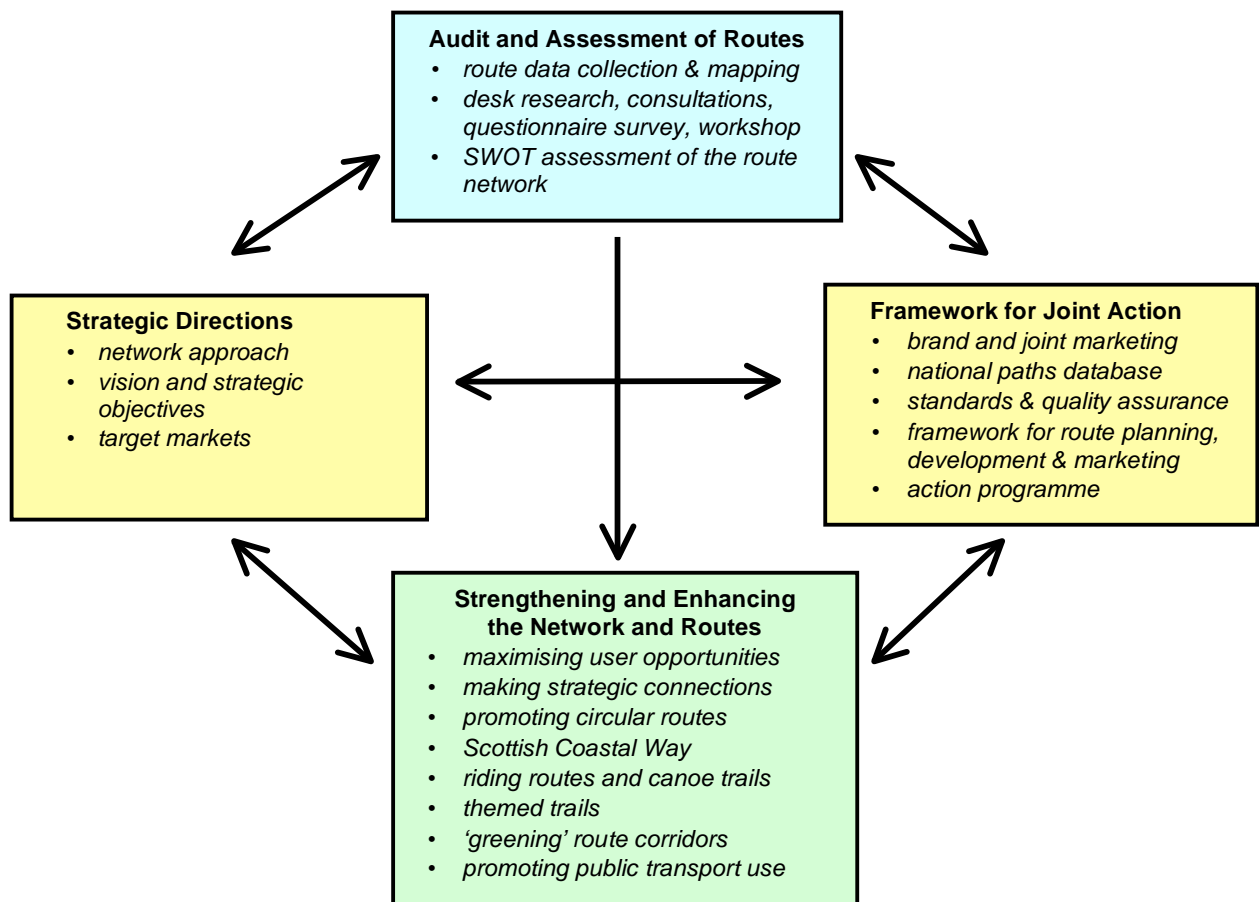
4.1.2 As shown in Figure 4.1, these assessments enabled the identification of a series of **strategic priorities for strengthening and enhancing the network of longer distance routes and individual routes**. These strategic priorities and recommendation in respect of each are discussed in subsequent sections of this report.

4.1.3 In summary, the strategic priorities are -

- i. **agreeing strategic directions for the network of longer distance routes** (section 5), with the emphasis on -
  - a. adopting a network-based approach
  - b. agreeing a vision and strategic objective
  - c. clarifying the principal user markets.

- ii. **strengthening and enhancing the network of longer distance routes and individual routes** (section 6), through
- maximising the potential of existing routes – by filling gaps, extending routes, removing barriers and enhancing multi-use provision
  - making strategic connections across the network
  - promoting longer distance circular routes
  - enhancing provision for horse riders and canoeists
  - developing a Scottish Coastal Way
  - strengthening the theming of routes
  - 'greening' route corridors
  - improving connections to public transport.
- iii. **developing a framework for joint action** (section 7) in respect of longer distance routes and, in particular, to -
- establish and maintain a paths and trails database
  - develop and maintain a quality assurance scheme
  - develop a long distance routes brand and joint marketing initiatives
  - strengthening route management and support.

Figure 4.1 Identifying priorities for longer distance routes from the audit and assessments





## 5. STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS FOR THE LONGER DISTANCE ROUTE NETWORK

### 5.1 Background

5.1.1 The audit and assessments have illustrated the extent and variety of longer distance routes which have been developed in many parts of Scotland over the last three decades. While these routes provide important local and national resources for recreation, tourism and active travel, it is evident that –

- there is a fragmented pattern of longer distance routes across Scotland, not an integrated network of such routes
- several longer distance routes are discontinuous – especially coastal routes
- some user groups, especially disabled users and horse riders, face shortfalls in provision and uncertainties over access on a substantial number of longer distance routes, due to locked gates, unsuitable surfaces, etc.
- there are opportunities to achieve a more effective and coherent network of longer distance routes through organisations with responsibilities for such routes adopting more strategic and collaborative approaches to route provision, management and marketing.

5.1.2 Local authority, recreation NGO and other participants at the Scottish Coastal Way Conference (held on 10 November 2009 at Stirling) and Longer Distance Routes Workshop (held on 7 December 2009 at Battleby) confirmed the above assessments and emphasised the need for clarification and agreement on strategic directions for Scotland's network of longer distance routes, including through –

- a. adopting a network-based approach
- b. agreeing a vision and strategic objectives
- c. clarifying the principal user markets for longer distance routes.

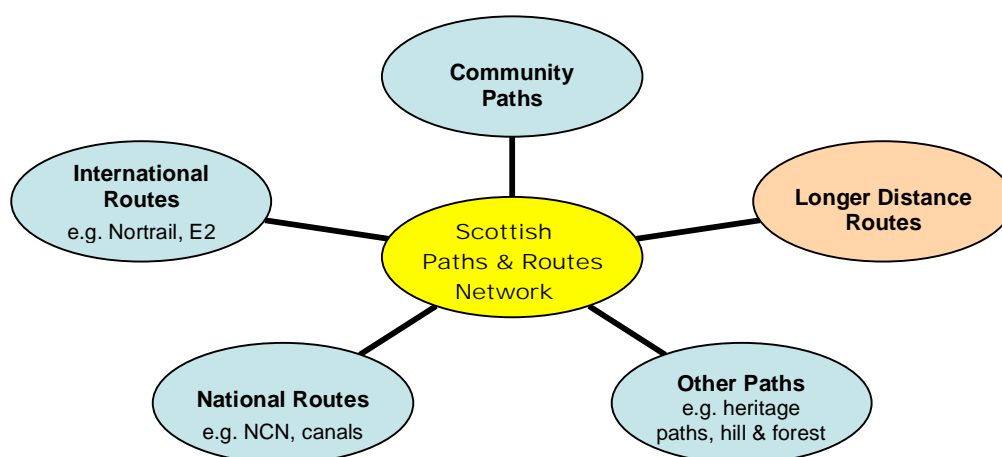
These aspects are discussed below.

### 5.2 Adopting a network-based approach to paths and routes planning, development and promotion

*Scotland's paths and routes network*

5.2.1 Longer distance paths comprise important elements of the wider network of paths and routes throughout Scotland, which provide for functional travel and recreation and tourism trips. Figure 5.1 illustrates the principal components of the national paths and routes network, as described below. While these paths and routes are referred to as forming a *network*, many are not interconnected or promoted in a collective way.

Figure 5.1 Key components of the Scottish paths and routes network



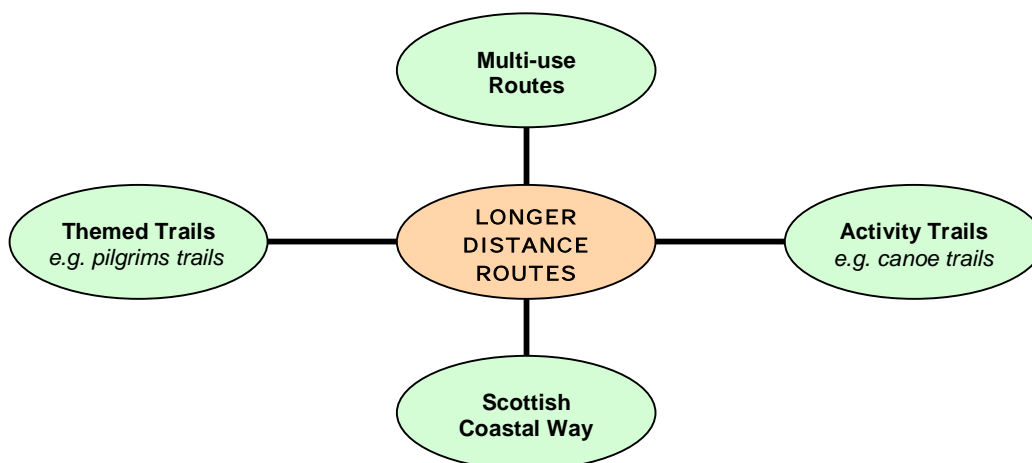
- 5.2.2 The **paths and routes network** comprises -
- a. **community paths** – including local core path networks, rights of way, footways and cycleways
  - b. **longer distance routes** – as discussed throughout this report
  - c. **other paths, tracks, cycleways and riding routes** – for example, farm, forest and estate roads, riverside, coast and hill paths, ‘wild country’ routes and heritage paths
  - d. **national routes** – such as National Cycle Network routes and the canals network
  - e. **international routes** – including the Europe-wide network of long distance E-paths and EuroVelo cycle routes, and proposals for an International Appalachian Trail. European long distance path E2 – from Galway to Nice (4,850 km), comprises parts of the Southern Upland Way, St. Cuthbert’s Way and the Pennine Way. The North Sea Cycle Route comprises EuroVelo 12.

*Longer distance routes network*

- 5.2.3 The **longer distance routes network** comprises a key element of the wider paths and routes network and includes a diverse range of routes (Figure 5.2), including -
- a. **multi-use routes** – the majority of longer distance routes, which enable access on foot, cycle or horse, and, where practical, by disabled users, for functional, recreational or tourism trips
  - b. **activity routes** – routes catering primarily for active recreation, tourism or sport, including –
    - **walking routes** – routes, or sections of routes, which may only be capable of sustaining use on foot (e.g. machair or moorland paths susceptible to erosion)
    - **cycle routes** – routes primarily for use by cyclists, but which are generally available to other users and may include quiet road, or on-road, sections. Extensive on-road sections of the National Cycle Network are excluded from the longer distance route network assessed in this report
    - **riding routes** – routes promoted principally for riding. These routes are usually suitable for walking, but may be too ‘soft’, or otherwise unsuitable, for cycling
    - **canoe trails** – routes on rivers, canals, lochs or inshore waters, which cater for trips by canoe, kayak, raft or other non-motorised watercraft.
  - c. **Scottish Coastal Way** – a continuous route around all, or part, of Scotland’s mainland coasts and initially comprising existing longer distance coastal paths and/ or cycle routes, or linked sections of local paths
  - d. **themed routes** – routes with specific themes, which provide the focus for an interpretative story throughout the length of the route.

- 5.2.4 Longer distance routes may comprise combinations of several of the above attributes and a series of **Ways** may be developed along the same route ‘corridor’ to cater for different types of users (cf. Great Glen Way, Great Glen Cycleway, Great Glen Canoe Trail). Recommendations for the longer distance route network, including many of the types of routes described above are discussed in more detail in subsequent sections of this report.

Figure 5.2 The longer distance routes network



- 5.2.5 A further category of route has been identified, which, in the absence of any commonly agreed description, is referred to in this report as an **epic route**. Such routes are largely undefined on the ground, provide challenging travel over often rough ground in more remote ‘wild country’, and require considerable self-reliance and navigation and outdoor skills (e.g. Cape Wrath Trail, Scottish Sea Kayak Trail). To protect the ‘wild country’ values and to retain the element of challenge provided by epic routes, it is suggested that such routes should not be developed or promoted as integral parts of the longer distance route network.

*Developing collaborative and strategic approaches across the paths network*

- 5.2.6 A network-based approach to paths planning and promotion can help to ensure the continuity and inter-connectivity of longer distance routes and other paths, provide opportunities for a wide range of users, and maximise the impact of limited budgets through investment in collaborative marketing programmes or other joint initiatives.

**Recommendation 1. The potential of Scotland’s longer distance routes should be maximised by access authorities and other route managers developing more integrated and collaborative approaches to the planning, management and marketing of the longer distance route network.**

Such joint approaches can build on the actions and investments of route managing organisations, while retaining local responsibilities for individual longer distance routes and supporting local initiatives by communities, user groups and other interests.

- 5.2.7 Research during this review has highlighted issues relating to the focus of core path plans on individual core paths and local core path networks, often with very limited consideration being to the wider paths network and, in particular, the strategic roles played by longer distance routes in providing access to, and between, core path planning areas. The inclusion of a strategic access diagram, or similar plan, overlain on a readily identifiable OS-base map, could encourage a more strategic approach to core path planning and the integration of core paths within wider path networks.

**Recommendation 2. Access authorities should be encouraged to adopt a path network-based approach to the planning and promotion of longer distance routes, core paths and other routes within their areas.**

**Recommendation 3. Core path plans should include a strategic routes plan clearly showing longer distance routes within the plan area and links to strategic routes in adjacent core plan areas.**



### 5.3 Agreeing a vision for the longer distance routes network

#### 5.3.1 The following text is presented as a potential basis for further development, consultations and agreement on a shared **Vision for Scotland's longer distance route network** -

*To create and sustain an inter-connecting network of sustainable longer distance routes offering attractive and high quality opportunities for recreational, tourism and everyday travel, on foot, bike, horse or water, by users with a wide range of abilities, and for trips of varying distances and offering varying degrees of challenge.*

*The network and its individual routes will –*

- reflect the diversity of Scotland's landscapes and 'showcase' and facilitate appreciation and enjoyment of our natural and cultural heritage*
- encourage active recreation, sport and travel, by people of all ages and abilities*
- benefit the health, well-being and economy of Scotland's communities*
- contribute to Scotland's competitiveness, nationally and internationally, as a destination for active and adventure tourism*
- assist conservation and land management, by encouraging responsible access*
- encourage community involvement in the provision and management of routes*
- be effectively managed and promoted, with adequate funding and other support.*

#### 5.3.2 **Recommendation 4. A Vision and strategic objectives for Scotland's network of longer distance routes should be agreed with partner organisations to provide strategic direction for the future planning, development and promotion of longer distance routes, individually and collectively.**

### 5.4 Clarifying and agreeing the principal markets for longer distance routes

5.4.1 A broad range of users will take functional, recreational or other trips of varying distances on longer distance routes; however, only some market sectors will comprise the principal target markets for such routes. For example, people walking or cycling to work, dog-walking, or going for a short stroll or ride can do so on local paths, rights of way or other routes; whereas, a primary function of longer distance routes is to provide opportunities for more energetic and longer distance day or multi-day walks, cycle or horse rides, or canoe trips. Nevertheless, signed and well-maintained longer distance routes can provide valuable resources to encourage less active people to participate in walking and cycling and to extend their levels of activity, experience and enthusiasm in such activities.

5.4.2 Table 5.1 sets out some of the principal market sectors of relevance to longer distance routes and suggests priority market sectors for longer distance route development and marketing. This Table shows the general pattern of long distance route user markets in Scotland and should be applied flexibly, since, for example, the development and promotion of longer distance routes in the Central Belt may give higher priority to functional and recreational trips by local users.

#### 5.4.3 **Recommendation 5. Partner organisations should be consulted, and their agreement sought, on priority market sectors for longer distance route development and marketing.**

Table 5.1 provides a potential basis for consultations on target market sectors, but may require to be modified to suit local circumstances and community needs.

Table 5.1 Longer distance route market sectors and priorities

Walking, Cycling, Riding and Paddling Market Sectors/Segments	Trip and User Characteristics	Potential Use of Longer Distance Routes		Priority for Longer Distance Route Provision and Marketing
		: high all-way/ multi-day trips	:low day / part-day trips	
<b>Everyday Functional Trip-Takers</b> (local residents)				
<b>Commuters</b>	trips to work, school, etc. mostly short distances (e.g. <8 km)	-		-
<b>Local trippers</b>	trips to shops, leisure centres, friends; mostly short distances	-		-
<b>Recreation, Sports and Tourism Trip-Takers</b> (local residents and visitors)				
<b>Amblers</b> - short casual trips	short walks/rides (e.g. <3 km) – all sectors including elderly, less able, young families, local residents and sightseers	-		1
<b>Strollers</b> - more active trips	short/medium walks/rides (<8 km) – all ages/groups, health walks, etc	-		1
<b>Energy-spenders</b> – very active trips	medium and longer walks/runs/rides – young, middle-age and active elderly, fit or seeking fitness			
<b>Challengers</b> LDR users – long distance walkers and runners, endurance riders, Non-users - hill walkers, cycle racers, technical mountain bikers	(i.e. self-challenges, competitions) medium to longer walks/runs/rides - young, middle-age and active elderly, fit/very fit			
	users of hill paths, roads or centres (e.g. MTB centres) - may use LDR for access	-		-
<b>Activity Holiday Takers</b> LDR users - route-based walkers, cyclists and riders Self-sufficient - 'epic journeys', operator organised trips	all ages and abilities, all lengths of trips, guided and self-guided			
	epic journeys; self-guided/guided trips on 'private' routes (may include LDRs in trip)			
<b>Events participants</b> Non-competitive events Competitive events	(e.g. charity or club events) all lengths of walk/run/ride, all ages			
	usually longer distance, day/multi-day events; young, middle-age and active elderly, fit/very fit			

Note: <sup>1</sup> Amblers and strollers will not be a primary target market, but their use of longer distance routes may be promoted to encourage such groups to increase their levels of physical activity and benefit their health.



## 6. STRENGTHENING AND ENHANCING THE LONGER DISTANCE ROUTE NETWORK AND INDIVIDUAL ROUTES

### 6.1 Developing recommendations for the longer distance route network

- 6.1.1 This section draws on the audit information, assessments and strategic directions outlined in the previous sections and focuses on practical measures to strengthen and enhance the network of longer distance routes and individual routes on the ground. In particular, it outlines strategic priorities and recommendations relating to –
- a. maximising the range of user opportunities on existing routes (s. 6.2)
  - b. making strategic connections in the network (s. 6.3)
  - c. establishing and promoting longer distance circular routes (s. 6.4)
  - d. progressing a Scottish Coastal Way (s. 6.5)
  - e. improving the provision of longer distance riding routes (s. 6.6)
  - f. creating canoe trails (s. 6.7)
  - g. strengthening or creating themed routes (s. 6.8)
  - h. 'greening' the longer distance route network (s. 6.9)
  - i. promoting the use of public transport by longer distance route users (s. 6.10).

### 6.2 Maximising the range of user opportunities on existing routes

- 6.2.1 The audit revealed that many longer distance routes provide opportunities for walking, but responsible use by cyclists, horse riders, and/or disabled users, is often unavailable, restricted or deterred, by unsuitable surfaces, barriers or obstacles, or a lack of information on the suitability of the route for specific uses. While topography, ground conditions and related factors may restrict opportunities to extend the range of uses which particular sections of a route can sustain, improvements to many routes have provided multi-use opportunities - thereby, adding value to these routes.
- 6.2.2 Where extensive sections of existing longer distance routes are unsuitable for up-grading to enable multi-use, a series of **Ways** may be developed, with some sections on a shared route and others on separate routes. The Great Glen Ways project exemplifies this approach, with a 'family' of recreational routes being developed within the Great Glen corridor on land and water. In Dumfries and Galloway, SWestrans - the regional transport partnership - is proposing a Southern Upland Cycleway, which will follow parts of the Southern Upland Way. A similar approach could be adopted for the development of a West Highland Cycleway, which could be separate from the West Highland Way along Loch Lomond (i.e. walking on east shore; cycling on west shore), but may share the same route over other sections (e.g. Tyndrum to Kingshouse).
- 6.2.3 **Recommendation 6. Access authorities and other route managers should assess the feasibility of extending the range of users which each longer distance route corridor can sustain and develop an action programme to achieve this.**
- 6.2.4 Examples of longer distance routes which merit up-grading and investment to sustain a wider ranges of uses over all/many of their sections, or the development of alternative Ways, include –
- Ayrshire Coast Path
  - Aberdeenshire Coast Path
  - Border Abbeys Way
  - Clyde Walkway
  - Cowal Way
  - Dava Way
  - Fife Coastal Path
  - John Muir Way
  - Southern Upland Way
  - Speyside Way
  - West Highland Way.

### 6.3 Making strategic connections in the network of longer distance routes

#### *Identification of strategic connections and gaps in the route network*

- 6.3.1 Information from the audit, local and national park authorities' survey and discussions with interest groups enabled the mapping of longer distance routes and the identification and assessment of strategic gaps in the route network. In particular, the audit information and the maps prepared from it have revealed –
- the fragmented pattern of longer distance routes across Scotland – largely due to the lack of a strategic network-wide approach to the planning and development of these routes
  - opportunities to link longer distance routes and other promoted routes to create additional strategic cross-Scotland or around-Scotland coastal routes - such routes will be particularly valuable where they link centres of population or provide connections to England's national trails and longer distance routes (e.g. Pennine Way, Pennine Bridleway, proposed North West Coastal Trail).

#### *Current strategic longer distance route connections across- and around-Scotland*

- 6.3.2 Table 6.1 and Map C shows the principal strategic connections currently available across- and around-Scotland on one or more longer distance routes, including routes in development, such as the Coalfield Cycle Route.

Table 6.1 Existing strategic cross-Scotland or around-Scotland routes

Strategic Directions	Routes	Longer Distance Routes	Comments
<b>Strategic Cross-Scotland or Coastal Routes</b> (current routes + routes in development)			
<b>East-West/ Coast-Coast</b>	<b>A. Borders to Galloway</b> (Cockburnspath to Port Patrick)	Southern Upland Way	Lengthy, challenging and indirect Coast to Coast route. Sections of limited attraction.
	<b>B. Borders to Ayrshire</b> (Cockburnspath/Borders Towns to Ayr)	Borders Coast or Pennine Way, Southern Upland Way, <i>Coalfield Cycle Route</i> , River Ayr Way	Lengthy, challenging and indirect route. Coalfield section is of limited scenic Attractiveness.
	<b>C. Edinburgh to Glasgow or Firth of Clyde</b> (Gourock)	Clyde to Forth Cycle Route	Good inter-City cycling link. Parts lack appeal – especially for walkers.
	<b>D. Edinburgh or Falkirk to Glasgow/Clyde</b> (Bowling) (+/- links to Loch Lomond, Cowal and Kintyre)	Union and Forth-Clyde Canals  +/- West Highland Way, Cowal Way and Kintyre Way	Good inter-City multi-use link. Towpath capacity issues. Option to extend trips to Loch Lomond, Argyll and Bute, etc..
<b>South-North</b>	<b>E. Border to Edinburgh</b>	Pennine Way or St Cuthbert's Way, South of Scotland Countryside Trails (+/- St. Cuthbert's Way)	Link to Pennine Way and English trails network. Longer distance routes stop short of Edinburgh. Links available/proposed (e.g. Pentland Hills paths, proposed Peebles-Roslin link). Attraction of Border Towns.
	<b>F. Solway Firth to Glasgow</b> (Eaglesham)	Annandale Way, Southern Upland Way, <i>Coalfield Cycle Route</i> , <i>Weavers Way</i>	Potential link to English national/regional trails by Cumbria Coastal Way (Gretna). Some central sections less attractive.
	<b>G. Glasgow to Fort William/ Inverness</b> (or Kintyre)	West Highland Way, Great Glen Way (+/- Cowal & Kintyre Ways)	Good Glasgow to Inverness/Highlands link. Attractive routes. Kintyre link of limited strategic value.
<b>Coast: East  West</b>	<b>H. Border to Moray Firth</b> (Berwick to Moray Firth)	Coastal paths – including sections of Nortrail/North Sea Cycle Route	Attractive coastal walking and cycling. Gaps in Angus, Aberdeenshire, etc.
	<b>I. Stranraer to Clyde Estuary and Glasgow</b>	Lochryan, Ayrshire and Clyde coastal paths/cycleways	Attractive coastal walking and sections of off-road cycle route. Some gaps.
	<b>J. Kintyre to Glasgow</b> (by Cowal or Arran)	Kintyre Way + a. Cowal Way, Ardgartan Peninsular Circuit, Three Lochs Way, Kelvin Way or b. Isle of Arran Coastal Way, Ayrshire Coastal Path, Clyde to Forth Cycle Route	Original routes with attractive scenic views over Firth of Clyde and potential for circular walking and cycling trips (see s.6.4)

- 6.3.3 This identification of strategic cross-country and coastal routes illustrates –
- a. east-west/coast-coast routes – the availability of continuous cross-country links across Southern and Central Scotland (i.e. Southern Upland Way, Clyde to Forth Cycle Route, Union/Forth-Clyde Canal Towpaths), but not across the Central and Northern Highlands
  - b. south-north routes – the availability of continuous north-south links from the Border to Edinburgh, and from Glasgow to Inverness, but not from the Border to Glasgow or Central Scotland, from Edinburgh to Perth or Inverness, or from Edinburgh or Glasgow to Aberdeen.
  - c. coastal routes – the availability of longer distance coastal paths along much of the coast from Stranraer to the Firth of Clyde and from the Border to the Moray Firth, with some gaps (e.g. on the Angus and Aberdeenshire coasts), but the lack of longer distance coastal paths along the Solway, Argyll and Highlands and Islands coasts.

*Opportunities to create additional strategic cross-/around-Scotland routes*

- 6.3.4 Having assessed the current pattern of strategic routes (Table 6.1, Maps A & B), a number of cross-country ‘corridors’ were examined to identify the potential for enhancing the strategic network of cross-country and coastal routes, and for creating additional longer distance routes by connecting existing routes and filling key gaps in the network. An assessment table was prepared for each potential route ‘corridor’ and these are presented as ‘working tables’ in Appendix C. Information and recommendations from the assessments are summarised in Table 6.2 and Map C.
- 6.3.5 The assessments focused on longer distance routes and potential link routes. It was not feasible, within this research, to identify core paths, rights of way and other local paths, which may be available to fill gaps in the strategic route networks.
- 6.3.6 While longer distance and link routes in Central Scotland were included in the assessments of existing routes (Table 6.1, Maps Bi and ii), the subsequent assessments of opportunities for additional cross-country routes and for resolving missing links in the strategic route network were undertaken in two stages –
- a. assessments of routes and route networks in Southern Scotland, Northern Scotland, the Islands, and around the coasts (Tables 6.2 and 6.3, Map C)
  - b. assessments of routes and route networks in Central Scotland (Table 6.4, Map D).

This two stage approach reflects –

- a. the need to assess and map current and potential routes in Central Scotland at a more detailed scale than other areas, due to the extent of development, etc.
  - b. the lack of longer distance routes and link routes across Central Scotland, but vital importance of such links to the Scotland-wide routes network. The only longer distance routes across Central Scotland are the Union/Forth Clyde Canal Towpaths and Clyde to Forth Cycle Route
  - c. the importance of a readily-accessible longer distance route network to link the main cities, towns and settlements of Central Scotland, to provide opportunities for active travel, recreation and tourism, and to promote physical activity amongst the residents of Central Scotland, who exhibit many indicators of poor health.
- 6.3.7 The assessment of route corridors in Central Scotland –
- a. relied largely on information from the Central Scotland Forest Trust and local authorities

- b. sought to identify a more comprehensive network of route corridors than for other parts of Scotland - some of which may not prove viable following more detailed assessments.

This research represents only an initial stage in a more comprehensive approach to the strategic provision of access routes in Central Scotland, which the Central Scotland Green Network intends to progress.

6.3.8 Table 6.2 identifies and provides recommendations for strategic cross-country and around-Scotland routes (excluding routes in the Central Belt; see Table 6.4). It shows –

- a. east-west/coast-coast routes – potential for several routes across Scotland, but, with the exception of a Fife/Forth to Glasgow/Clyde/Loch Lomond route (subject to early completion of the proposed King’s Highway), the longer timescales which may be required to achieve such routes, due to the number and/or extent of missing longer distance routes or link routes. In particular, there are no obvious cross-country routes north of Inverness and the Moray Firth.
- b. south-north routes – in contrast to a., there is potential for creating strategic north-south routes and linkages – several of which could be achieved over the next 10 years, subject to funding. These routes would provide valuable links from England’s national and regional trails, through Southern Scotland, to the Central Belt and beyond (e.g. on the West Highland Way).
- c. coastal and island routes (see more detailed discussion in section 6.5) - there is scope to enhance coastal access from Stranraer to the Firth of Clyde, and from the Border to the Moray Firth, by filling gaps in, and enhancing multi-use opportunities on, these paths, or by creating coastal ‘Ways’. Additionally, there is scope to link and augment core paths and other local paths and, thereby, provide a continuous coastal path along the Solway Firth in Dumfries and Galloway and along much of the other mainland and island coasts, as opportunities arise.

*Missing links in the strategic route network*

6.3.9 As discussed above, the development of strategic cross-country routes is dependent on filling a number of key missing links on the network of longer distance routes and link routes. Table 6.3 identifies missing links and provides a summary assessment and recommendations for these in Southern, Central and Northern Scotland. Potential routes which could fill gaps in the strategic routes network in Central Scotland are identified in Table 6.4.

6.3.10 Table 6.3 shows –

- a. Southern Scotland – the importance of linking Gretna to the Annandale Way, to link England’s strategic route network to the Scottish network, and to link Peebles and Roslin (or Penicuik) to connect the longer distance route network in the Scottish Borders to Edinburgh and the Forth Valley. Links between the River Ayr Way, Southern Upland Way, Clyde Walkway and John Buchan Way are also seen as filling vital east-west and north-south gaps in the network of strategic routes in central Southern Scotland. Due to the lengths of these missing link routes, these may require to be developed over a long timescale (i.e. 10+ years)
- b. Central Scotland (excluding the Central Belt) – the proposed King’s Highway (Stirling to Drymen) and Stirling to Callander routes will fill key gaps in the network between the Central Belt and the North (by the Rob Roy Way) and North-West (by the West Highland Way +/- Great Glen Way). Hence, these routes are identified as priorities for development over the next 10 years. Further north, the Killin to Tyndrum and Tyndrum to Oban routes will provide essential cross-country links to Oban and the West Coast islands. The feasibility of developing these routes has been assessed and they are recommended for development in the next 10 years and 10+ years, respectively, subject to funding

- c. Northern Scotland – linking Aberdeen/Aberdeenshire with Speyside, the Moray Firth and Inverness will require the completion of several, often lengthy, missing links and can only be considered as a longer-term intention. Filling gaps between Findhorn (Moray Coastal Trail), Forres (Dava Way) and Inverness would provide valuable connections and enable the promotion of the proposed long distance circular Moray Country and Coast Trail (s. 6.4).

*Providing strategic routes connections across the Central Belt*

6.3.11 As indicated above, a number of potential route ‘corridors’ were identified in the Central Belt to provide key east-west, or north-south, links in the Scotland-wide network of routes and, importantly, to facilitate and encourage active travel and recreation for those living in the Central Belt. Strategic ‘corridors for search’ for potential routes are identified and assessed in Table 6.4 along with recommendations on priorities and timescales. In each case, the suggested routes will require further evaluation; in particular, to identify the availability of core paths, cycleways or other routes which may comprise parts of these routes.

6.3.12 From Table 6.4, it can be seen that –

- a. east-west corridors – in addition to the Clyde to Forth Cycle Route, Union/Forth-Clyde Canal Towpaths and Round the Forth Cycle Route, there are opportunities to develop further east-west routes from Dolphinton (South of Scotland Countryside Trails network) to the Clyde Walkway, from the northern Pentland Hills (Little Vantage) to the Clyde Walkway and from Kirkliston to Cumbernauld
- b. south-north corridors – in the absence of significant south-north routes through the Central Belt, other than routes to/from Glasgow or Edinburgh, it is suggested that high priority be given to developing such routes. Several potential route corridors are identified - running northwards from the Pentland Hills to Linlithgow, Falkirk, Stirling, Cumbernauld and the Carron Valley, and from the Clyde Walkway/Cycleway to Cumbernauld, the Carron Valley and Strathkelvin Walkway (West Highland Way link). Subject to further assessments and available funding, it is suggested that priority be given, over the next 10 years, to progressing south to north links from the Pentlands to Linlithgow, Falkirk and Stirling, from the Clyde Walkway to Cumbernauld and the Carron Valley, and from Coatbridge to the Strathkelvin Railway Path.

6.3.13 It has not been possible to indicate the potential costs of these routes, as information on the suitability and multi-use capabilities of existing paths which may comprise sections of these routes was not readily available. Since commencing this research, the Central Scotland Green Network has commissioned research on open space and access networks within Central Scotland, which should provide more comprehensive and prescriptive assessments and recommendations for longer distance and other strategic routes.

*Progressing the recommendations for strengthening and connecting-up the strategic network of longer distance routes*

6.3.14 ***Recommendation 7. SNH, access authorities and other key partners should review the provision of strategic cross-country and around-the-coast longer distance routes and identify a Scotland-wide programme of action to strengthen and fill key gaps in this network.***

Tables 6.2 to 6.4 provide information and recommendations which will assist progress on the above recommendation and this may be progressed under the auspices of the proposed Longer Distance Routes Forum (s. 7.5), or a working group reporting to the Forum.



# Map C. Strategic cross- and around-Scotland Routes

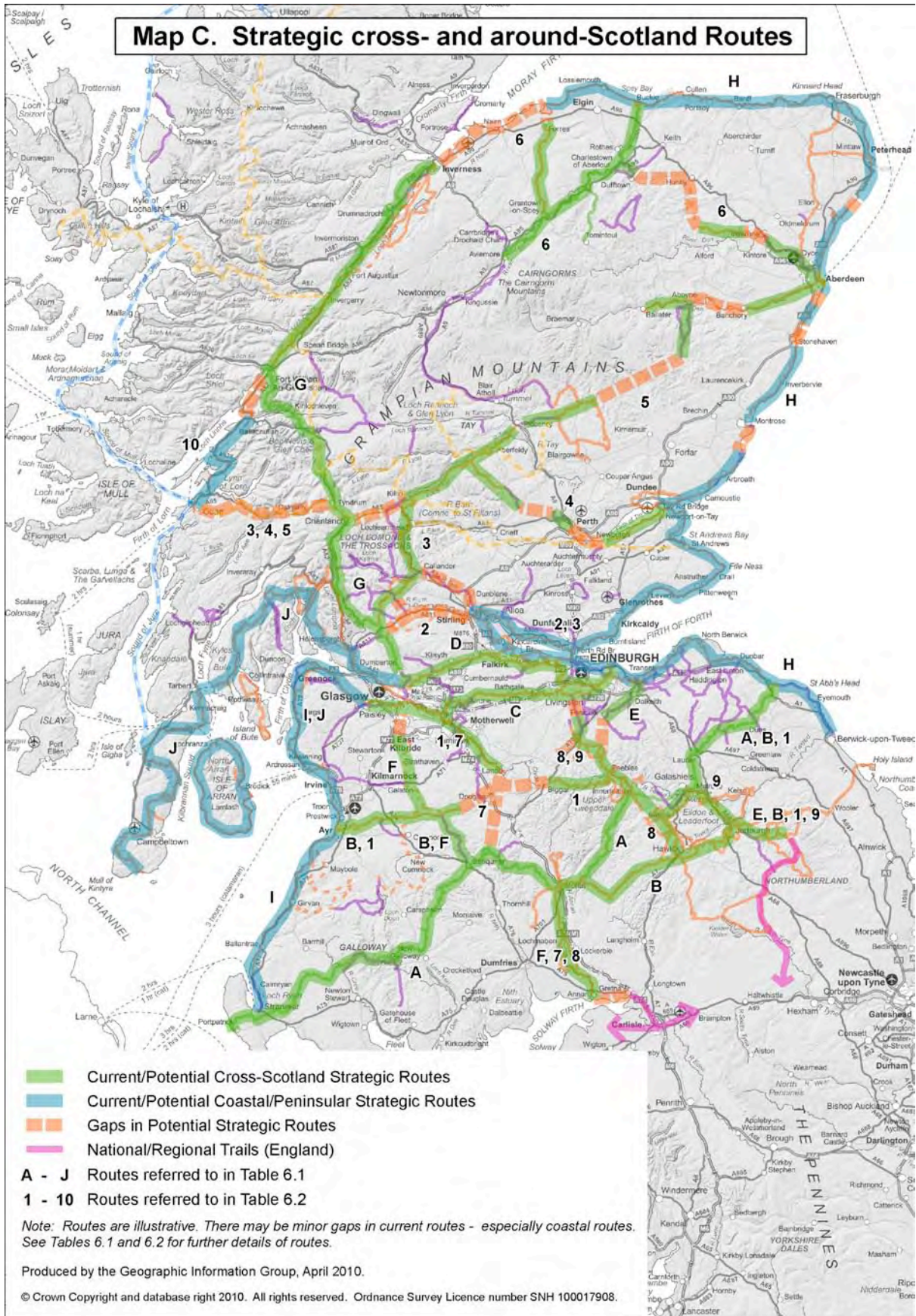


Table 6.2 Assessment of potential opportunities for strategic cross-Scotland or around-Scotland routes

Route	Longer Distance Route Linkages (missing sections <u>underlined</u> , link routes in <i>italics</i> )	Key Considerations	Approximate Distance (km; rounded)	Recommended Priority : low : high	Recommended Timescale ▲ : 10+ years ▲▲▲ : 0-10 yrs
<b>East - West / Coast - Coast</b> (see also Table 6.3 for routes in the Central Belt)					
<b>1. Border/East Coast to Ayrshire or Glasgow</b> (Pennine Way or East Lothian/ Berwickshire to Ayrshire/Ayr)	Southern Upland Way(+/- links from Pennine Way), South of Scotland Countryside Trails, <i>John Buchan Way</i> , <u>missing link</u> , River Ayr Way to Ayr, or Clyde Walkway to Glasgow	Attractive route through the Borders. Link(s) from John Buchan Way to River Ayr Way and/or Clude Walkway required.	180+ km		▲
<b>2. Fife/Forth to Glasgow, the Clyde or L. Lomond</b> (+/- links to West Highlands and Argyll)	Fife Coastal Path, Round the Forth Cycle Route, <u>Kings Highway</u> , <i>Kelvin Walkway</i> or West Highland Way	Valuable east-west, multi-use route. Requires proposed Kings Highway link.	185+ km		▲▲▲
<b>3. Fife to Trossachs and West Highlands</b>	Fife Coastal Path, Round the Forth Cycle Route, <u>Stirling-Callander</u> , Rob Roy Way + <u>Killin-Tyndrum</u> , <u>Tyndrum-Oban</u> ; or <u>Callander-Loch Katrine</u> , <u>Stronachlachar-Inversnaid</u> , West Highland Way, <u>Tyndrum-Oban</u>	Potentially attractive east-west, multi-use route. Extensive missing links. Requires major investment	160+ km		▲
<b>4. Fife or Perth to West Highlands</b> (Oban)	Fife Coastal Path, <u>proposed Tay Trail</u> , <u>missing links</u> , Rob Roy Way, <u>Killin-Tyndrum</u> and <u>Tyndrum-Oban</u> routes	Potentially attractive route. Extensive missing links in Perthshire and Killin to Oban links will be costly to complete. Requires major investment.	185+ km		▲
<b>5. Aberdeen/Aberdeenshire to Argyll</b> (epic route)	Deeside Way, <u>missing link</u> , Cateran Trail, <u>Enochdhu/Kirkmichael-Pitlochry path</u> , Rob Roy Way, <u>Killin-Tyndrum</u> and <u>Tyndrum-Oban</u> routes	Potentially attractive route, but extensive missing links – especially from Deeside to Highland Perthshire. <b>Recommended as epic route</b> due to lengthy, high and exposed section between Deeside and Angus/Highland Perthshire	260+ km		▲
<b>6. Aberdeen/Aberdeenshire to Moray Firth and Inverness, or to Newtonmore</b>	<u>River Don Path</u> , <u>missing link</u> , Gordon Way + extensions to Inverurie and Huntly, <u>missing link (or future Strathbogie and Cabrach Way)</u> , <u>Isla Way</u> or Speyside Way, Moray Coast Path, <u>missing link</u> to Inverness; or Speyside Way to Newtonmore	Potentially valuable link from Aberdeenshire to Speyside, Moray Firth and Inverness. Extensive missing links. Requires major investment	190+ km		▲
<b>Moray Firth/Inverness to Wester Ross</b> (e.g. Torridon)	<b>No current longer distance routes or significant link routes</b>	<b>Not assessed in detail.</b> No available longer distance/link routes. Potentially very high costs			▲
<b>Dornoch Firth to North West Highlands</b>	<b>No current longer distance routes or significant link routes</b>	<b>Not assessed in detail.</b> No available longer distance/link routes. Potentially very high costs			▲

Note: Indicative distances are based on map-measurements and may significantly under-estimate the actual distances on the ground.



Table 6.2 Assessment of potential opportunities for strategic cross-Scotland or around-Scotland routes (continued)

Route	Longer Distance Route Linkages (missing sections <u>underlined</u> , link routes in <i>italics</i> )	Key Considerations	Approximate Distance (km, rounded)	Recommended Priority : low : high	Recommended Timescale ▲ : 10+ years ▲▲▲ : 0-10 yrs
<b>South – North</b> (see also Table 6.3 for routes in the Central Belt)					
<b>7. Border/Solway Firth to Glasgow</b> (to Clyde Walkway)	<i>missing link</i> , Annandale Way, Southern Upland Way, then a. <i>Coalfield Cycle Route</i> , River Ayr Way, <i>missing link</i> , Clyde Walkway; or b. <i>Wanlockhead-Elvanfoot</i> , <i>missing link</i> , Clyde Walkway	Important Border to Glasgow link (+/- links to Highlands). Sections are through less attractive countryside.	170+ km	a.: b.:	a.: ▲ b.: ▲ c.: ▲
<b>8. Border/Solway Firth to Edinburgh or Stirling</b>	<i>missing link</i> , Annandale Way, Southern Upland Way, S. of Scotland Countryside Trails <i>Pentland Hills paths</i> , Clyde to Forth Cycle Route	Potentially valuable strategic route to Central Scotland (and North) from south-west. Route has limitations and missing sections.	160+ km		▲▲▲
<b>9. Border/Cheviots to East/Central Scotland</b>	South of Scotland Countryside Trails (+/- Borders Abbeys Way), then <i>Pentland Hills paths</i> , Clyde to Forth Cycle Route	Scope to link Pennine Way/Bridleway to Central Scotland. Most sections available	110+ km		▲▲▲
<b>Edinburgh or Stirling to Inverness</b> (by Highland Perthshire)	<b>No longer distance multi-use routes from Dunfermline to Speyside, or beyond Speyside</b> , except NCN1 (alongside A9 in many sections).	Multi-use route from Edinburgh/Stirling to Inverness would be valuable. Parts of NCN1 alongside A9 would not be attractive for long distance walking/riding.			▲
<b>Coasts and Islands</b>					
<b>Mainland Coast: Stranraer to Glasgow; Border to Moray Firth</b>	<b>See Table 6.1.</b> Coast paths from Stranraer to Glasgow and from Berwick to Moray Firth, but some gaps (see s. 6.5)	These coasts offer highest market potential. Priority to fill gaps and provide for multi-use.	180+ km 560+ km		▲▲▲
<b>Mainland Coast: a. Solway Firth Coast; b. Argyll &amp; Northern Highlands Coasts</b>	<b>No longer distance paths</b> <b>No longer distance paths</b> , except sections of Kintyre and Cowal Ways and Oban to Ballachulich Cycle Route (see below)	Priority should be given to link core/local paths to create sections of longer coastal paths. Remoter, 'wild' coast sections of Argyll and Highlands should remain undeveloped to enable epic journeys		a. b. /	a.: ▲▲▲ b.: ▲
<b>10. Oban to Fort William</b> (part of long-term Caledonia Way)	Oban to Ballachullish Cycle Route, <i>proposed Ballachullish to Fort William link route</i>	Important link route from Oban to Fort William, but requires off-road link to A82 corridor or use of minor road on west side of Loch Linnhe.	58+ km		▲
<b>Orkney and Shetland</b>	<b>No proposals for longer distance routes</b>	Priority being given to core paths. Potential to link some core/local paths to create longer routes.			▲
<b>Western Isles</b>	Proposals for – a. Outer Hebrides walking route b. Outer Hebrides cycle routes	High costs estimates, limited/ seasonal markets priorities for core paths result in low priority for walking route. More potential for cycle route (mainly on-road)	a.: 271 km b.: 327 km	a.: b.:	a.: ▲ b.: ▲▲▲
<b>Other West Coast Islands</b>	No short-/medium-term proposals for new longer distance routes and no current longer distance routes (except virtual routes), other than those identified in Table 6.1.	Potential for longer-term longer distance routes on Skye (lower level), Mull and Islay. Skye Trail (high level) is more appropriate for epic journeys. Other islands are too small for longer distance routes			▲

Note: Indicative distances are based on map-measurements and may significantly under-estimate the actual distances on the ground.

Table 6.3 Assessment and recommendations for completing missing links in the strategic longer distance route network

Key Missing Links in Strategic Network	Longer Distance Route Linkages <i>(link routes in italics)</i>	Key Considerations	Approximate Distance (km)	Likely Scale of Costs £: <£50k; ££: £50-100k; £££: £100+k	Recommended Priority : low : high	Recommended Timescale ▲ : 10+ years ▲▲▲ : 0-10 yrs.
<b>Southern Scotland</b> (including Ayrshire)						
<b>Gretna Green to Annan</b>	Cumbria Coastal Way (Gretna) – Annandale Way (Annan)	Key link from England's trails (especially Cumbria Coastal Way, North West Coastal Trail & Hadrian's Path National Trail) and Scotland's network, via Annandale Way. Essential part of proposed Border to Inverness route. Some core paths available. May contribute to Solway coast paths.	10-15 km	££ / £££		▲▲▲
<b>Biggar to Clyde Walkway to River Ayr Way</b>	<i>John Buchan Way (Biggar) – Clyde Walkway (New Lanark) - River Ayr Way (Glenbuck)</i>	East-west link from Scottish Borders to Ayrshire, West Coast, Glasgow and proposed Border to Inverness route. Offers link to South of Scotland Countryside Trails network, Nethan Walkway, Coalfield Cycle Route, Weavers Way and Ayrshire Coastal Path, etc.. Some core paths available.	40 km	£££		▲▲▲
<b>Elvanfoot to Biggar</b>	<i>John Buchan Way (Biggar)</i> , above route to Clyde Walkway (New Lanark), <i>Elvanfoot-Wanlockhead</i> link to Southern Upland Way	Key link from Border at Solway Firth and English national/regional trails (as above) and Southern Upland Way to Edinburgh and Central Scotland (see Table 6.2) and to Borders towns. Could provide attractive route from Border to Glasgow via link to Clyde Walkway. Likely existing core path sections.	25-30km	£££		▲
<b>Peebles to Roslin</b>	South of Scotland Countryside Trails (Peebles, Eddleston), <i>John Buchan Way (Peebles)</i> , <i>Penicuik – Musselburgh Walkway/Cycleway</i>	Important link in proposed Border (Pennine Way/Bridleway) to Edinburgh route and from Borders towns to Central Belt. Mostly on former railway line. Planning applications lodged for Eddleston – Roslin sections. Link from Peebles to Eddleston available on South of Scotland Countryside Trails.	25 km	£££		▲▲▲
<b>Central Scotland</b> (including Argyll & Bute, Perth & Kinross and Angus; see also Table 6.4 for routes in the Central Belt)						
<b>Kings Highway</b>	Round the Forth Cycle Route (NCN76) (Stirling), Rob Roy Way/NCN 7 (Drymen)	Key east-west, multi-use link from Stirling and Central Scotland, by Carse of Stirling villages to Drymen, West Highland Way and Rob Roy Way. Links on West Highland Way to Fort William/West Highlands and Gt. Glen Way to Inverness/Northern Highlands. Valuable active travel links between Carse villages and to Stirling. Parts complete. Feasibility report available.	40 kms	£££		▲▲▲
<b>Stirling to Callander</b>	Round the Forth Cycle Route (NCN76) (Stirling), Rob Roy Way /NCN7(Callander)	Essential link for walkers, cyclists (proposed NCN 765) and riders from Stirling and Central Scotland, via Bridge of Allen and Dunblane, to North and West Highlands, by Callander and the Trossachs to Rob Roy Way and Perthshire and West Highland Way and Gt. Glen Way to North. Part complete Feasibility report available.	26 kms (parts complete)	£££		▲▲▲
<b>Killin to Tyndrum</b>	Rob Roy Way (Killin), West Highland Way (Criarlarich, Tyndrum)	Key link between Rob Roy Way and West Highland Way, enabling travel from East and Central Scotland by Stirling, proposed Stirling - Callander link, Rob Roy Way and West Highland Way to Fort William/West Highlands and Islands +/- Great Glen Way to Inverness/North Highlands. Some minor road and path sections available. Feasibility report available.	32-35 km	£££		▲▲▲
<b>Tyndrum to Oban</b>	West Highland Way (Tyndrum), Oban-Balachulish Cycle Route (Connel to Oban section)	Important east-west link from West Highland Way and Rob Roy Way (when Killin-Tyndrum link completed) to Oban, West Highlands and Islands. Strong community support (incl. Oban-Balachulish Cycle Route + future extension to Fort William). Some existing paths. Feasibility report available.	69-76 km (part complete)	£££		▲

Note: Indicative distances are based on map-measurements and may significantly under-estimate the actual distances on the ground.

Table 6.3 Assessment and recommendations for completing missing links in the strategic longer distance route network (continued)

Key Missing Links in Strategic Network	Longer Distance Route Linkages <i>(link routes in italics)</i>	Key Considerations	Approximate Distance (km)	Likely Scale of Costs £: <£50k; ££: £50-100k; £££: £100+k	Recommended Priority : low : high	Recommended Timescale ▲ : 10+ years ▲▲▲: 0-10 yrs.
<b>North East Scotland and the Highlands and Islands</b>						
<b>Aberdeen to Speyside Way</b>	Aberdeenshire Coastal Path and Aberdeen's North Sea Trail, Formatine & Buchan Way, Gordon Way, <i>Isla Way</i> , Speyside Way	Valuable long-term link from Aberdeen to Speyside Way and Inverness (if coast path link from Forres to Inverness available – see below). Potential to link Aberdeen, Dyce, Inverurie, Huntly, Dufftown and Aberlour. Some core paths available + River Don Path (in development), Gordon Way (+ proposed extensions to Inverurie and Huntly) and <i>Isla Way</i> . Extensive missing links.	42-45 km (parts complete)	£££		▲
<b>Findhorn to Inverness</b>	Moray Coast Trail (Forres), Dava Way (Forres), Great Glen Way (Inverness)	Key link from Moray coastal towns, Speyside Way and Dava Way to Inverness and essential part of North Sea Trail/North Sea Cycle Route. Link required from Forres to Findhorn. Paths available over part of route.	32-35 km	£££		▲▲▲

Note: Indicative distances are based on map-measurements and may significantly under-estimate the actual distances on the ground.

Table 6.4 Central Scotland strategic routes: current routes and 'corridors for search'

Route Corridor	Approximate Route (unless existing route, description illustrates corridor for search)	Comments	Approximate Distance (km)	Recommended Priority : low : high	Recommended Timescale ▲ : 10+ years ▲▲▲ : 0-10 yrs
<b>East – West Corridors</b>					
<b>1. Dolphinton to Clyde Walkway</b>	Dolphinton, Dunsyre, Newbiggin, Carnwath, Carstairs Junction, Ravenstruther, Lanark or New Lanark	Former railway line may provide path from Dolphinton to Carstairs Junction. Other paths. Potential link from Pentlands/ South of Scotland Countryside Trails/North Tweeddale Paths to Clyde Walkway/Cycleway. New Lanark only significant attraction.	23 km		▲
<b>2. Pentland Hills to Clyde Walkway</b> (Southern Corridor)	Pentland Hills (Cauldstone Slap - Harperrig/Little Vantage), Cobbinshaw Reservoir, Williamstown, Kings Hill Plantation, Clyde Walkway (nr. Dalsenf)	Limited extent of existing paths. Varying landscape quality. No significant attractions.	45 km		▲
<b>3. Clyde to Forth Cycle Route</b>	Edinburgh, Bathgate, Livingston, Caldercruix, Airdrie, Coatbridge, Glasgow	Existing NCN multi-use route. All-abilities access where surfaces suitable. Valuable cycle route linking Central Belt cities/towns. Limited attraction for longer distance walks.	85 km	existing route	
<b>4. Kirkliston to Cumbernauld</b>	Kirkliston, Oatridge, Beecraigs Country Park, Slamannan, Cumbernauld	Mostly on core paths, local paths and minor roads. Attractions: River Avon Heritage Trail, Bathgate Hills and Beecraigs and Palacerigg Country Parks	42 km		▲▲▲
<b>5. Union/Forth-Clyde Canal Towpaths</b>	Edinburgh, Ratho, Linlithgow, Falkirk, Kilsyth, Kirkintilloch, Glasgow	Existing route. Mostly attractive walking/cycling. All-ability access where surfaces suitable. Attractions: Canals, Linlithgow Palace, Helix, Falkirk Wheel, Antonine Wall	80 km	existing route	
<b>6. Round the Forth Cycle Route to Falkirk or Stirling</b>	Edinburgh, South Queensferry, Boness, Grangemouth, Falkirk or Stirling	Existing, attractive walking and cycling route. All-abilities access on sections. Attractions: Dalmeny and Hopetoun Estates, South Queensferry, Forth Bridges, Forth Clyde Canal + Helix, Falkirk Wheel + Antonine Wall, or Stirling Castle, etc.	45-65 km	existing route	
<b>South – North Corridors</b>					
<b>7. Pentland Hills to Linlithgow</b>	a. Pentland Hills (Cauldstone Slap), East Calder, Almondell & Calderwood Country Park, then - b. Clyde to Forth Cycle Route, Union Canal, Broxburn, Linlithgow c. Uphall, Bathgate Hills, Linlithgow d. Clyde to Forth Cycle Route, Livingston, Bathgate Hills, Linlithgow	Useful link from  South Scotland over Pentlands to Central and North Scotland, by Clyde to Forth Cycle Route or Union/ Forth Clyde Canals, etc.. Limited existing paths and some minor roads links. Attractions: a. Union Canal, Linlithgow Palace, etc. b; c; d. Bathgate Hills, Beecraigs Country Park, Union Canal, Linlithgow Palace, etc..	22- 29 km	a.: b.: existing route c.: d.	▲▲▲ existing ▲▲▲ ▲▲▲
<b>8. Southern Corridor</b> (above) to <b>Grangemouth/Falkirk</b> (+ links to Forth Valley, Stirling and West)	Pentland Hills (Cauldstone Slap - Harperrig), West Calder, Clyde to Forth Cycle Route at Bathgate or Livingston, Bathgate Hills, Linlithgow, Boness, or Falkirk (Union Canal), or Grangemouth (R. Avon Heritage Trail)	Route links all east-west routes and provides important south-north links between Bathgate/Livingston, Bathgate Hills, Linlithgow and Boness, or Grangemouth, or Falkirk. Attractions: Beecraigs Country Park/Bathgate Hills, Linlithgow Palace, Canals, Falkirk Wheel, Helix, R. Avon Heritage Trail	40-44 km		▲▲▲
<b>9. Southern Corridor to Falkirk</b> (+ links to Stirling, Forth Valley and North)	Forth to Fauldhouse, Clyde to Forth Cycle Route at Blackridge or Armadale, Black Loch, Slammanan, Falkirk	Route north of Clyde to Forth Cycle Route provides important link across Central Belt. Varying scenic quality. No significant attractions except Falkirk Wheel	35 km		▲

Note: Indicative distances are based on map-measurements and may significantly under-estimate the actual distances on the ground.

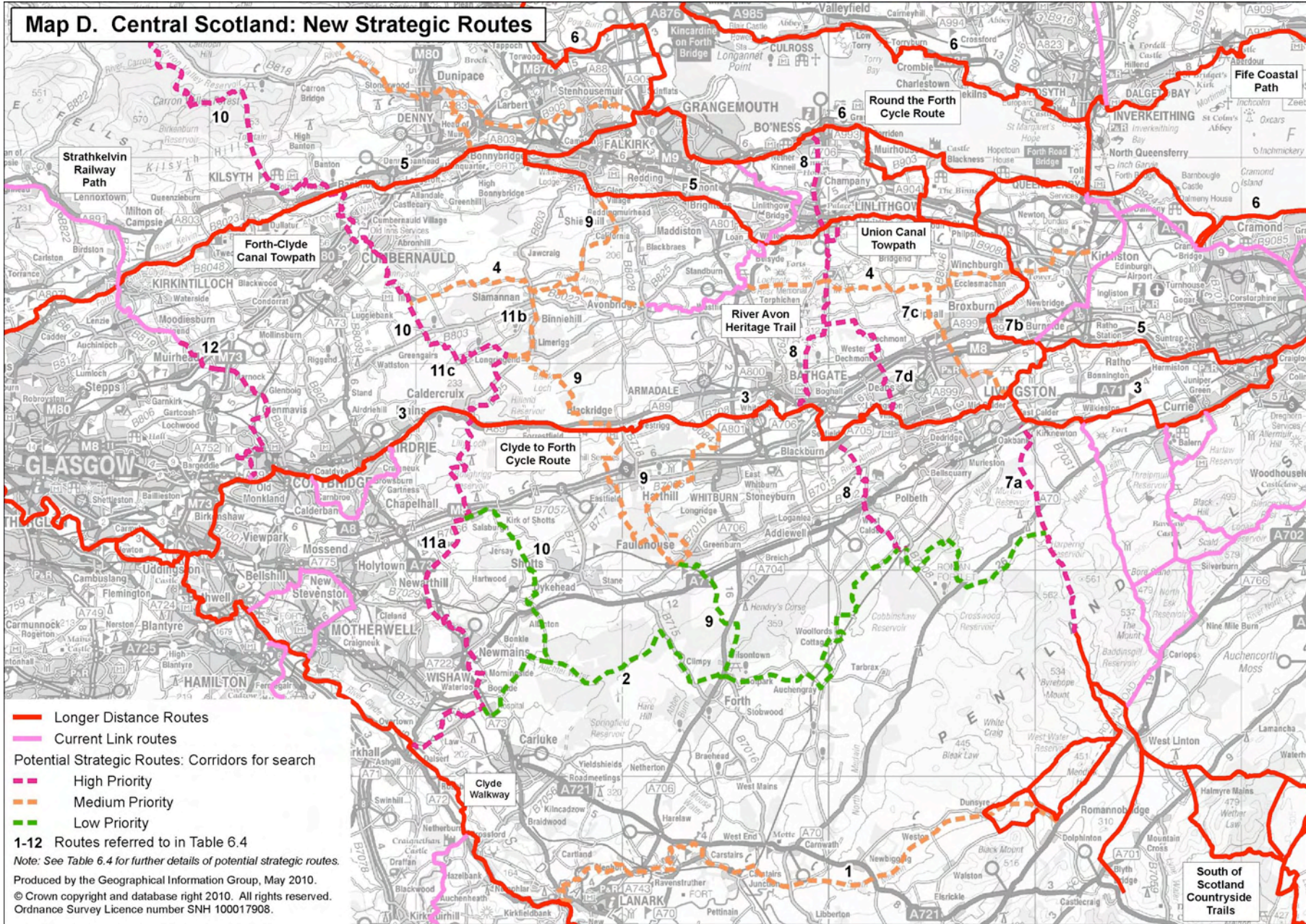
Table 6.4 Central Scotland strategic routes: current routes and 'corridors for search' (continued)

Route Corridor	Approximate Route (unless existing route, description illustrates corridor for search)	Comments	Approximate Distance (km)	Recommended Priority : low : high	Recommended Timescale ▲ : 10+ years ▲▲▲ : 0-10 yrs
<b>South – North Corridors</b> (continued)					
<b>10. Southern Corridor to Cumbernauld +/- Carron Valley</b> (+ links to North & West)	Forth to Auchterhead, Salsburgh, Clyde to Forth Cycle Route, Hillend Reservoir, Cumbernauld, Forth-Clyde Canal, Kilsyth, Carron Valley (+ North)	Routes north of Clyde to Forth Cycle Route provide important links across Central Belt. Varying scenic quality. Attractions: Hillend Reservoir, Palacerigg Country Park, Canal, Antonine Wall, Carron Valley and Campsie Hills	42-53 km		▲▲▲
<b>11. Clyde Walkway to Falkirk or Cumbernauld</b> (+ links to North)	a. Garrion Bridge, Newmains, Clyde to Forth Cycle Route at Hillend Reservoir, then b. as Falkirk route above c. as Cumbernauld route above	Important link from Clyde Walkway to strategic east-west routes and Strathkelvin Railway Path + North. Attractions: River Clyde, Hillend Reservoir, Palacerigg Country Park, Carron Valley and Kilsyth Hills	45-50 km	a.: b.: c.:	a.: ▲▲▲ b.: ▲ c.: ▲▲▲
<b>12. Coatbridge to Strathkelvin Railway Path</b> (+ links to North & West)	Clyde to Forth Cycle Route at Coatbridge, Moodiesburn, Strathkelvin Railway Path + North	Drumpellier Country Park, Summerlee Heritage Centre, 5 Lochs, Forth-Clyde Canal, Campsie Hills	8 km		▲▲▲

Note: Indicative distances are based on map-measurements and may significantly under-estimate the actual distances on the ground.



# Map D. Central Scotland: New Strategic Routes



- Longer Distance Routes
- Current Link routes
- Potential Strategic Routes: Corridors for search
  - - - High Priority
  - - - Medium Priority
  - - - Low Priority
- 1-12 Routes referred to in Table 6.4

Note: See Table 6.4 for further details of potential strategic routes.  
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### *Developing a Scottish sea-to-sea cycle route(s)*

- 6.3.15 The previous discussion and recommendations on cross-Scotland routes has focused on longer distance walking and multi-use routes. The development and promotion of the C2C cycle route, from St. Bees, Whitehaven or Workington on the coast of Cumbria, to Sunderland or Tynemouth on the north-east coast of England, demonstrates the demand for, and success of, a coast-to-coast cycle route across attractive upland countryside. During 2006, an estimated 241,000 cycle trips on the C2C, including 14,000 end-to-end trips, generated expenditures of £10.7m and created or supported some 173 full-time equivalent jobs (Sustrans & uclan, 2007).
- 6.3.16 While the national cycle network comprises several promoted longer distance cycle routes in Scotland (e.g. the Coast and Castles and Lochs and Glens cycle routes), there is potential scope for developing and creatively marketing at least one coast-to-coast cycle route across Scotland. Such a route(s) may comprise dedicated cycleways, forest roads, hill tracks, quiet roads or other routes, and could provide links to, and between, established off-road cycling centres (e.g. 7 Stanes, Nevis Range/Leanachan Forest and Laggan WolfTrax mountain biking centres). Coast-to-coast cycle routes could be developed as new stand-alone routes, or as cycling 'Ways' which would complement existing walking-oriented routes, such as the Southern Upland Way.
- 6.3.17 As this study focuses on mainly off-road routes, it has not identified quiet roads, or similar routes, which may be incorporated in one or more coast-to-coast cycle route(s). However, the following 'corridors for search' could provide an initial basis for investigating potential coast-to-coast cycle routes –
- a. Southern Scotland coast-to-coast cycle route –
    - Borders route: Berwick/Eyemouth to Stranraer - via Borders towns, link to Pennine Bridleway (Byrness or Kielder), Newcastleton, Mabie and/or Dalbeattie and Kirroughtree (7 Stanes centres); or
    - Southern Upland Cycle Way: Dunbar to Port Patrick - via Innerleithen and/or Glentress (7 Stanes centres), Moffat, Ae and Glen Trool (7 Stanes). Part of this route in Dumfries and Galloway is being developed by SWestrans
  - b. Central Highlands coast-to-coast cycle route –
    - Central Highlands route: Stonehaven or Aberdeen to Fort William ('Outdoor Capital of the UK') – via Strathmore or the Deeside Way, Pitlochry, Loch Rannoch, Spean Bridge and Nevis Range/Leanachan Forest; or
    - Speyside and Great Glen route: Buckie or Cullen to Fort William - via the Speyside Way, Aviemore, Laggan WolfTrax, Corrieyairack Pass, Great Glen Cycleway and Nevis Range/Leanachan Forest.
- 6.3.18 ***Recommendation 8. The feasibility of developing and marketing a Southern Scotland coast-to-coast cycle route and/or a Central Highlands coast-to-coast cycle route should be assessed. These routes should cater for a range of recreational and tourist cycling markets, not just mountain bikers.***

The assessments of these routes and their potential development may be progressed under the auspices of the Scottish Mountain Bike Consortium or the Paths for All Partnership's cycling sub-group.

## 6.4 Establishing and promoting longer distance circular routes

6.4.1 The mapping of longer distance routes and promoted link routes has illustrated the scope to promote a series of strategic circular trails. These circular trails will usually comprise combinations of three or more longer distance and/or link routes with co-terminus locations. This approach can add value to, and optimise previous investments in, the individual longer distance routes, by –

- a. enabling circular trips from home or visitor accommodation – rather than requiring out-and-return journeys by the same route, or returning by public or private transport
- b. providing more variety in the landscapes, attractions, visitor experiences and other aspects of the trip, than on single route trips - for example, by combining coast and countryside routes
- c. encouraging exploration and longer visitor stays - including in some less well-known visitor destinations
- d. providing attractive promotional package and encouraging joint investment in marketing by route managing authorities – thereby increasing visits, enhancing the appeal of visitor destinations associated with the routes and maximising the potential of marketing budgets.

6.4.2 As most of the individual routes are fully operational, the costs of progressing such an initiative would primarily comprise the costs of information and marketing. However, some additional investments may be required to up-grade the quality of the routes and their corridors, and to improve connections between the routes – often using core paths or cycle routes within urban areas.

6.4.3 Table 6.5 and Map E illustrates the circular route concept and potential combinations of routes. Titles for the circular routes are illustrative ‘working titles’ and will require further assessments and testing of their market appeal. In most cases, the circular routes may be developed as a series of Ways – providing the same, or separate parallel, routes catering for walkers, cyclists, riders and disabled users. These proposed routes would be in addition to current circular longer distance routes, such as the **Borders Abbeys Way, Isle of Arran Coastal Path, Ardgartan Peninsula Circuit, Round the Forth Cycle Route** and proposed **Tay Trail**.

Table 6.5 Recommended circular trails

Circular Trail (illustrative title only)	Constituent Longer Distance Routes and Promoted Link Routes	Key Towns, Attractions and Features of Interest (examples)
<b>A. Clyde Valley &amp; Firth Trail</b>	Clyde to Forth Cycle Route, Greenock Cut & Kelly’s Cut, Ayrshire Coastal Path, River Ayr Way, missing link, Clyde Walkway	Glasgow, Pollok Park/Burrell, Clyde Coast, Largs, Kelburn, Ayr, Alloway (Burns), River Ayr, Falls of Clyde, New Lanark, Chatelherault, etc.
<b>B. Loch Lomond and Pearls of the Clyde Trail</b>	Clyde & Loch Lomond Cycleway/West L. Lomond Cycle Path - or Three Lochs Way, Cowal Way, West Island Way (option), Kintyre Way, Isle of Arran Coastal Way, Ayrshire and Inverclyde Coastal Paths, Clyde to Forth Cycle Route	Glasgow, Loch Lomond, Arrochar, Argyll Forest Park, Cowal, Bute (option), Tarbert, Arran, Goatfell, Brodick, Largs, Paisley, Pollok Park/Burrell Collection
<b>C. Loch Lomond &amp; The Trossachs</b> (from Glasgow)	Clyde & Loch Lomond Cycleway, West L. Lomond Cycle Path - or Three Lochs Way, ferry, Inversnaid –Stronachlachar, Loch Katrine, forest paths, Rob Roy Way, West Highland Way, Kelvin Walkway	Glasgow, Loch Lomond, Loch Katrine, Queen Elizabeth Forest Park, Aberfoyle, Drymen, Glasgow
<b>D. Trossachs &amp; Loch Lomond Trail</b> (from Stirling)	Kings Highway, West Highland Way, Inversnaid-Stronachlachar, Loch Katrine, forest paths, Rob Roy Way – or proposed Loch Katrine to Callander path, proposed Callander-Stirling route	Stirling, Drymen, Loch Lomond, Loch Katrine, Callander [route depends on development of Kings Highway]
<b>E. Central Scotland Cycle Circuit</b>	Union/Forth-Clyde Canal Towpaths, Clyde to Forth Cycle Route	Edinburgh, Linlithgow, Falkirk, Glasgow, Airdrie, Bathgate, Livingston [good cycle route; not so attractive return walking route]

Table 6.5 Recommended circular trails (continued)

Circular Trail (illustrative title only)	Constituent Longer Distance Routes and Promoted Link Routes	Key Towns, Attractions and Features of Interest (examples)
<b>F. Lothians &amp; Borders Hills and Coast Trail</b>	Water of Leith Walkway/Cycleway, Pentland Hills routes, South of Scotland Countryside Trails and linked routes, Southern Upland Way, (+/- Borders Abbeys Way), John Muir Way	Edinburgh, Pentlands, Peebles, Tweed Valley, Borders Towns, Abbeys and Houses, Sir Walter Scott, Lammermuirs, Dunbar, John Muir, Belhaven Bay, N. Berwick, Seabird Centre, Aberlady Bay
<b>G. Forth Heritage Trail</b>	Water of Leith Walkway/Cycleway, Edinburgh Waterfront/Round the Forth Cycle Route, <u>missing link</u> , Union Canal Towpath	Edinburgh, Cramond, Dalmeny House/Estate, S. Queensferry, Forth Bridges, Hopetoun House/Estate, Linlithgow Palace, Union Canal
<b>H. Moray Country and Coast Trail</b>	Speyside Way, Moray Coast Trail, Dava Way	Grantown-on-Spey, Aberlour, Spey Bay, Lossiemouth, Burghead, Findhorn, Forres
<b>I. Monster Trail</b>	Great Glen Way (West Loch Ness) and Great Glen Cycle Route (East Loch Ness)	Fort Augustus, Invermoriston, Drumadrochit, Inverness, Foyers

6.4.4 **Recommendation 9. SNH should invite bids from access authorities for participation in a pilot project to jointly develop and promote a small number of longer distance circular trails and to test the success of these, prior to rolling out this concept more widely.**

The circular trail concepts illustrated in Table 6.5 should guide the selection of the pilot circular trails, which should largely be based on existing longer distance routes and link routes. If successful, future circular trails may be developed from those illustrated in Table 6.5 or, in the longer term, from those identified in Table 6.6.

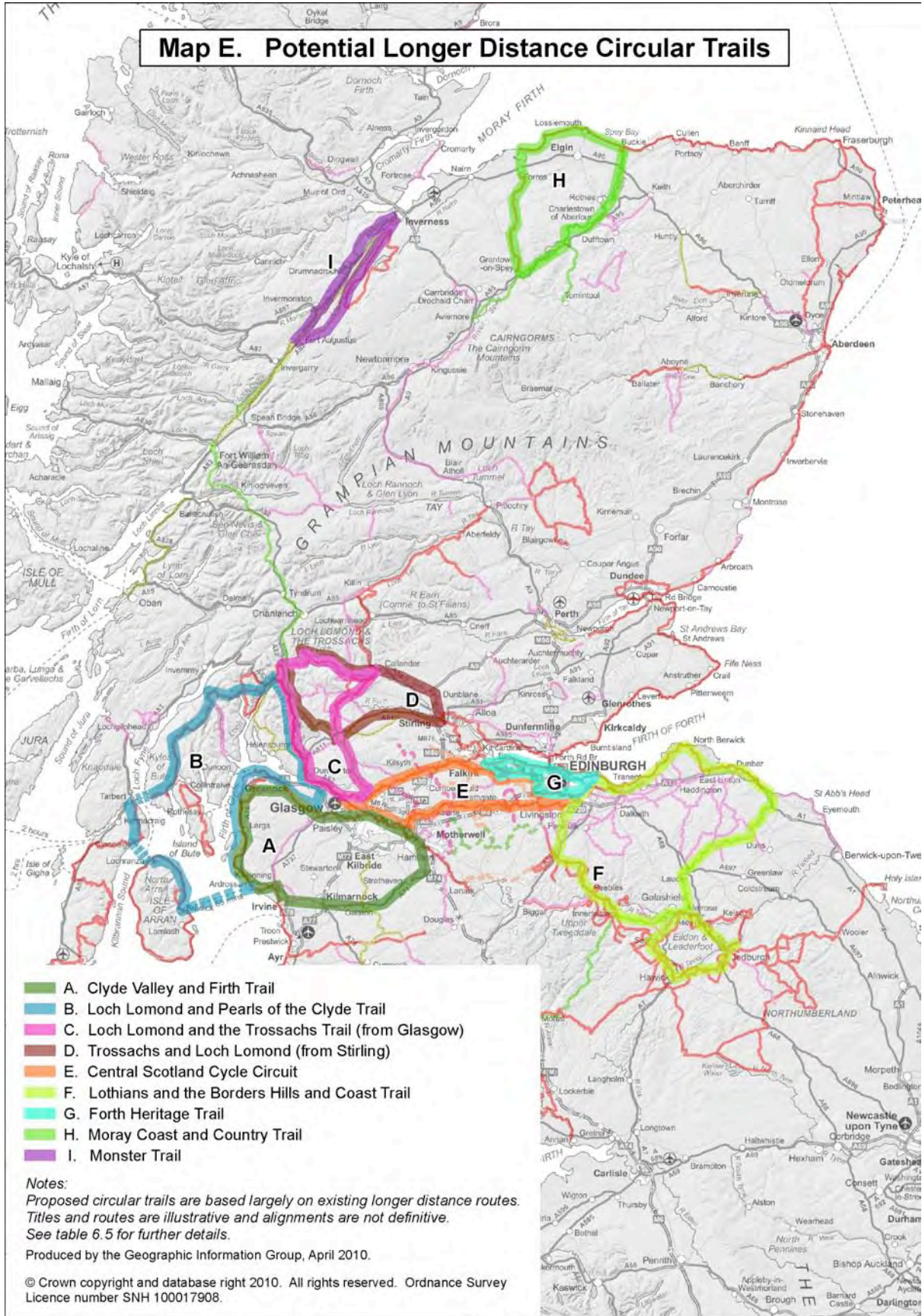
Table 6.6 Potential circular trails for longer-term consideration

Circular Trail	Potential Routes	Reasons for Assessment as Longer-term Options
<b>Solway Coast &amp; Hills Trail</b>	Newton Stewart and Solway Coast: including Gatehouse-on-Fleet, Kirkcudbright, New Abbey, Dumfries, River Nith, Southern Upland Way	Southern Upland Way is only longer distance route. No other link routes recorded. Fragmented local coastal and valley paths.
<b>Heart of Ayrshire Trail</b>	Ayrshire Coastal Path, Carrick Way, Barr-Loch Doon link/Carrick Forest Drive, Coalfield Cycle Route, River Ayr Way	Insufficient accommodation and services to promote route
<b>Round Fife Trail</b>	Fife Coast Path, proposed Queens Highway (sections from Newburgh to Dunfermline), local link paths	Route cannot be developed until Newburgh to Dunfermline section developed by linking local paths
<b>Aberdeenshire Coast &amp; Country Trail</b>	River Don Path (in development), <u>missing link</u> , Gordon Way (+ proposed extension), <u>missing link</u> , Speyside Way, Aberdeenshire Coastal Path, +/- Formatine to Buchan Way	Missing link between Dyce and Inverurie. Requires extension of Gordon Way from Suie to Huntly and links to Speyside Way.

6.4.4 Additional options for circular trails were ruled out from the outset, due to lack of suitable routes (e.g. potential Central Perthshire circular route) and/or their potential lack of appeal and quality visitor services - especially accommodation (e.g. potential Central Scotland circular walk following the Union and Forth-Clyde Canal Towpaths and returning by the Slammanan Plateau).



## Map E. Potential Longer Distance Circular Trails



## 6.5 A Scottish Coastal Way

### *Background*

- 6.5.1 Proposals for a Scottish Coastal Way – a route around Scotland’s mainland coastline – have been promoted on the Internet by walkers<sup>3</sup>, discussed in the Scottish Parliament and at the Scottish Coastal Way Conference (Nov. 2009) and are the subject of the “*Scottish Coastal Way concept statement* (SNH, 2009) and *Access Around the Scottish Coast* scoping paper (SNH, 2009) – from which this section draws information.
- 6.5.2 Coastal paths are important national and international recreation and access resources. Most Western European countries have a coastal access ‘corridor’ and coastal paths network (Peter Scott Planning Services, 2006) and regional/local authorities in Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Germany, The Netherlands and the UK are collaborating to develop and promote the North Sea Trail (NAVE Nortrail) and North Sea Cycle Route. Also, England is currently developing an English Coastal Route, following enactment of the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009.
- 6.5.3 Scotland’s coastline is one of the longest in Europe, extending to 10,192 kms, of which 3,907 kms (38%) is the mainland coast (Scottish Office, 2003). Some 70% of the population live within 10 kms of the coast and our larger cities lie on the coast. In 2008, there were some 8.6m main activity day visits to the seaside - a large proportion of which would have been for walking and cycling. Publicity for the coast (e.g. BBC’s *Coast* and *SpringWatch* programmes) have raised people’s interest in the coast’s rich natural, built and cultural heritage and the Scotland’s coastline contains a wealth of wildlife viewing opportunities, castles, fishing villages, archaeological remains, etc.. Also, coastal paths often provide important connections between settlements and between longer distance routes – the majority of which have a coastal start or end point (e.g. Southern Upland Way, Speyside Way).
- 6.5.4 The popularity of the John Muir Way and Fife Coastal Path demonstrate the value of high quality, well promoted and maintained coastal paths. Surveys show that Fife Coastal Path attracted 480,580,000 visits in 2006/07, with these visits generating £24m-£29m of expenditures and supporting some 800 jobs ([www.fifecoastandcountryidetrust.co.uk](http://www.fifecoastandcountryidetrust.co.uk)). Around 72% of these trips were part-/day visits and 26% were multi-day visits - often outside the peak tourism season.

### *Current coastal paths provision*

- 6.5.5 SNH has collated information for around 20 local authority areas, which suggests that there is an estimated 2,700 km of coastal paths and routes. Many of these paths will take detours around river estuaries, coastal wetlands and key installations (e.g. power stations, ports) and through urban areas; hence, the 2,700 kms of paths does not infer that 2,700 kms of the 3,907 kms of mainland coastline has some sort of path or other access route. Indeed, coastal paths and routes are likely to comprise a mixture of beaches and shorelines, paths, farm and estate roads and tracks, cycleways, footways and other routes.
- 6.5.6 Research for this study has focused on promoted longer distance routes and potential link routes and Map F shows that –
- a. such routes are available, or are in development, in the vicinity of :
    - most of the South West and Clyde Coasts – from Stranraer to Glasgow
    - the majority of the North Sea Coast – from the Border to the Moray Firth
    - most of Arran’s coast and sections of the coasts of Kintyre, Cowal and Bute.

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<sup>3</sup> See [www.nationalcoastalpath.co.uk](http://www.nationalcoastalpath.co.uk) and [www.walkingscotlandscost.co.uk](http://www.walkingscotlandscost.co.uk)



- b. while there are shorter coastal paths, there are few/no extensive coastal paths along –
- the Solway Coast
  - the West and North West Highlands coasts
  - the Pentland Firth coast
  - the coasts of the Orkney, Shetland and Western Isles, or most of the smaller islands of the West Coast.

6.5.7 Even in areas with coastal paths, there are issues of paths and shore sections being suitable only for walkers, being unavailable or hazardous at high tides, or including potentially hazardous clifftop sections. In such circumstances, cyclists, horse riders and disabled users may have to use local or main roads – often with no footways and with fast traffic – to travel in the vicinity of the coast. Conversely, many sections of coast offer attractive opportunities for cycling – for example, on the Ayrshire Coast Cycleway or the North Sea Cycle Route in East Lothian (parts available in 2009).

6.5.8 While there are no promoted longer distance coastal paths on the main island groups, many of the islands already provide outstanding opportunities for walking and cycling on local paths and quieter roads. These offer scope for enhanced marketing and, in particular, joint initiatives to enhance signing, information and other visitor facilities, and to promote longer distance inter-island trips (e.g. Glasgow-Oban-Colonsay-Jura-Islay-Kintyre-Arran-Ardrossan-Glasgow) using ferry and rail services.

6.5.9 Access managers responsible for coastal areas with few or no extensive promoted coastal paths have referred to –

- substantial difficulties in funding the development and maintenance of coastal routes, where rural and island authorities have low budgets, very extensive and often remote coastlines, low visitor numbers and highly seasonal tourism markets
- problems of developing and maintaining routes, where coastlines are subject to erosion, are of high conservation value, or where landowners are not supportive
- the need to give priority to core paths and other paths serving local communities, especially where, traditionally, paths provision may have been given low priority.

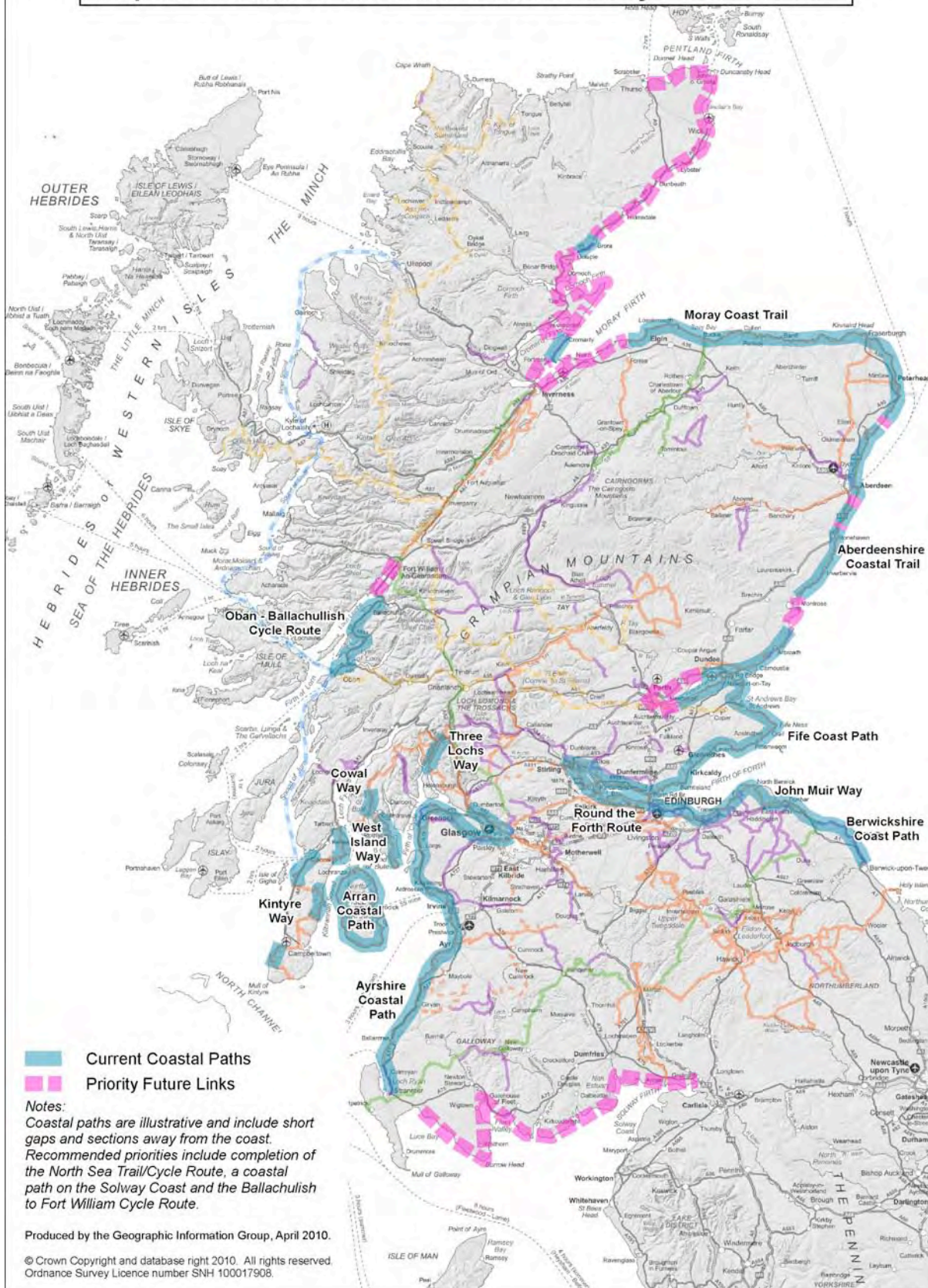
A recent feasibility study estimated the costs of providing a longer distance walking route (off-road) and cycling route (mostly on-road) throughout the length of the Western Isles at £1.5m. The local authority is unlikely to be able to fund such costs in the short-/medium terms.

*Priorities for coastal paths and a Scottish Coastal Way*

6.5.10 Participants in the Scottish Coastal Way Conference generally agreed with the vision of a Scottish Coastal Way, but emphasised that this would be a very long-term aim. The extent and character of such a route was not agreed. Indeed, the development and promotion of a formal route around much of the North West Highlands would not only be difficult to find and achieve, but would conflict with policies and aspirations for the conservation of ‘wild land’ values in Scotland. In such areas, the concept of ‘epic journeys’ is more appropriate, where there may be published and website guidance on key locations, the conditions likely to be met and safety advice, but not a formal route and extensive sections may provide challenges of navigation and self-reliance in untracked coast and countryside with few services (cf. Sutherland Trail).

6.5.11 ***Recommendation 10. Proposals for a Scottish Coastal Way should be developed and agreed for long-term implementation (e.g. by 2030). This Coastal Way (or series of Ways) should provide opportunities to walk and cycle continuously, or on multi-day journeys, in the vicinity of Scotland’s coasts, on a variety of well-maintained paths, tracks and minor roads, and through areas of ‘wild’ coast and countryside.***

# Map F. Coastal Routes: Current and Priority Future Routes



- 6.5.12 **Recommendation 11. Access authorities and partner organisations should work jointly and independently to enhance opportunities for walking, cycling, riding and disabled access around Scotland's coast, with priority being given to –**
- a. **up-grading existing sections of coastal path, or creating new coastal ways (i.e. parallel walking, cycling and/or riding routes), to extend the range of activities supported by existing routes, insofar as appropriate given local environmental and other conditions**
  - b. **filling gaps in current coastal path provision along the Solway, Clyde and North Sea Coasts (from the Scottish Border to the Dornoch Firth) – thereby focussing attention on coastal areas in the vicinity of the main centres of population**
  - c. **connecting local paths on other sections of coast, as opportunities arise**
  - d. **enhancing the themeing, information and interpretation of coastal paths to promote enjoyment and understanding of Scotland's marine environment, maritime heritage and related aspects of interest (e.g. seafood)**
  - e. **promoting inter-island walking and cycling trips, using existing paths, minor roads and ferry services.**
- 6.5.13 Partnership working at the national, sub-national and local levels will be essential to the effective, long-term planning of the Scottish Coastal Way and the development, enhancement, management and marketing of sections of the Coastal Way. The recommendations in section 7 illustrate partnership structures to support such programmes.

## **6.6 Longer distance riding routes**

### *Background*

- 6.6.1 Previous sections of this study have considered horse riders' needs in relation to designated and other longer distance routes. Where information was available, provision for riders was identified in the audit and assessments (s. 3) and major shortfalls were identified in riding provision on longer distance routes. While a focus of this study is on maximising the multi-use potential of existing longer distance routes, consideration is given in this section to the scope for providing further linear, or circular, longer distance routes to specifically cater for horse riders, while being available to others, in compliance with the access legislation.

### *The horse riding market and its requirements*

- 6.6.2 There are around 100,000 horses and 200,000 riders in Scotland (BHS Scotland, 2009) and a further 200,000 horses in the North of England - within easy travel distance of South and Central Scotland. A proportion of these riders will have little or no interest in riding for long distances, but the numbers of those interested in trail riding, endurance riding and Trec (a test of horse-handling and navigation in difficult terrain) are growing and many owners are keen to find new challenges and further ways to enjoy leisure time with their horse. Also, some riders may use longer distance routes to train for competitive disciplines, or for carriage driving, where wider tracks or little trafficked roads are available and obstacle-free.
- 6.6.3 Most riding trips are likely to comprise day or part-day trips and the *Scottish Recreation Survey* estimated that over 1% of the 336.7m outdoor recreation day visits in 2007 included horse riding as an activity, but did not indicate the types of riding, or routes, involved. The *Equestrian Tourism Project* (Wood-Gee V. & Costley T., 2004) demonstrated significant latent demand for longer distance routes and, as riders gain confidence and experience, the numbers on longer distance rides are likely to increase.

- 6.6.4 The Henley Centre estimated the value of horse tourism (i.e. trekking and hacking holidays) in the UK, in 2004, as almost £71m, including expenditures on riding holidays in Scotland. Many riding holidays in Scotland involve organised trekking, but new self-guided riding routes and enhanced promotion of existing routes can generate significant new income and business opportunities in rural areas. For example, the development of the Mary Towneley Loop on the Pennine Bridleway in England has stimulated the growth of new horse and rider B&Bs, and guided trail riding and luggage transfer businesses, in an area not generally recognised as offering significant tourism potential.
- 6.6.5 While several Scottish companies offer multi-day, trail riding holidays (e.g. Highlands Unbridled, Brenfield Farm), few hire horses for longer distance, self-guided, trips – largely due to insurance issues and concerns over the welfare of horses being hired to unknown riders. Even if horses were available for hire, most owners would wish to ride their own horses.
- 6.6.6 The *Equestrian Tourism Project* explored the potential market for self-guided riding visits (all lengths of rides) in the South of Scotland and found that 73% of respondents from throughout the UK were interested in riding in the South of Scotland, including 60% of whom might use self-guided routes. While most riders are not prepared to transport their horses for long distances, the survey confirmed that many would be willing to travel for 2 to 3 hours for a 2- or 3-day ride and a maximum of 6 to 8 hours for a week-long ride.
- 6.6.7 The *Survey of horse riding in Scotland* (System Three Scotland, 1999) found that 25% of British Horse Society members and 29% of users of riding establishments considered the provision of more longer distance routes as the most, or second most, important provision required to facilitate riding in Scotland. Provision of shorter routes were considered of most importance.
- 6.6.8 In addition to the criteria for longer distance routes outlined in Appendix C, horse riders on multi-day rides generally require horse- and rider-friendly accommodation, at conveniently spaced intervals on/close to the riding route, secure vehicle and trailer parking, and varied surfaces, including softer ground for cantering. Attractive and appropriate themes (e.g. drove roads) and opportunities for beach riding can add to the appeal of a route.
- 6.6.9 Circular and looped routes (e.g. figure-of-8 loops) appeal to a higher proportion of riders than linear routes, as this allows them to return to their accommodation or horse transport. The average distance most trail riders are interested in riding is 24 to 32 km a day over 4 to 5 hours, but experienced endurance and trail riders typically cover around 40 km/day. Less experienced riders may enjoy such a challenge, but not for several days in a row.

*Existing provision of longer distance riding routes*

- 6.6.10 None of Scotland's designated LDRs has been developed to meet the specific needs of riders (cf. Pennine Bridleway), and few other longer distance routes have been specifically developed or are marketed for riding. Exceptions are -
- a. the **Hawick Circular Riding Route** and **Buckleuch Rides** in the Borders, which are part of the 350 km **South of Scotland Countryside Trails network** - for which detailed route descriptions are being produced. This network of routes will be marketed in ways to assist riders to more easily identify half-/full-day and multi-day rides
  - b. the 27 km **Dava Way Ride** – partly on the route of the Dava Way ([www.meag.org.uk](http://www.meag.org.uk)). Numerous locked and other gates and sections with clinker surfacing material reduce the practicality and enjoyment of riding on this route



- c. the 80 km **Trail of the Seven Lochs** - above the eastern shores of Loch Ness. This riding route is being waymarked and promoted by the local equestrian access group. A lack of funds to address boggy sections and install horse-friendly gates, and its distance from centres of population other than Inverness, are likely to limit this Trail's market appeal and use.

Several other routes have been established by horse tourism companies (e.g. Highland Unbridled's Coast to Coast Rides), but these are not signed and maintained, or accessible to the public, and locked gates are only opened for their clients' use.

#### *Recommendations for the development of riding routes*

- 6.6.11 While this report recommends that priority be given to maximising the multi-use potential of existing routes and ensuring that such routes have as few barriers or obstructions as feasible, the potential value of strategically located riding routes has been emphasised by horse riders' representatives (e.g. BHS's Scottish Equestrian Access Conference in 2009) and is recognised by the consultant. Consultees have reported a major need for longer distance riding circuits within easy access from the Central Belt and referred to potential 'areas for search' for such circuits in the Central Belt, including - the Clyde Valley, Campsie and Kilsyth Hills, West Lothian and Falkirk, and the Ochil and Cleish Hills. Other potential areas, outwith the Central Belt, include the Loch Ken area and Galloway Forest Park. However, the consultees were unable to suggest specific longer routes and the audit shows no current promoted routes in the Central Belt with potential to be inter-connected to create an attractive longer distance circuit – other than the routes mentioned below.
- 6.6.12 Proposals for the route of a **Great Scottish Ride** ('working title'), from the Cheviots (Pennine Bridleway) to Killin, are set out in Table 6.7 and Map G. This would provide a **longer distance route for riding and mountain biking**, where surfaces can support both uses – but priority would be given to provision for riding.
- 6.6.13 This proposed route would extend from the north end of the Pennine Way, at Byrness (England), through the Scottish Borders on the South of Scotland Countryside Trails network and related riding/multi-use routes to the Pentland Hills. After crossing the Pentlands, it could take one of several optional routes through the Central Belt, on current or proposed longer distance routes, multi-use paths, cycleways, farm or forest tracks, or core paths. It has not been possible to investigate these routes in detail and the locations identified below are indicate potential route 'corridors', requiring further assessment. From Kirkintilloch northwards to Killin, routes such as the Strathkelvin Railway Path, Water Road around the Campsie Hills, and sections of the Rob Roy Way could provide a stronger route framework, but sections of these routes would require improvements and the resolution of issues of locked gates to enable and sustain riding.
- 6.6.14 The total length of the proposed Great Scottish Ride is estimated as 265-310 km (one-way), depending on the options taken. There are many good service centres throughout the route, although accommodation may be more limited in parts of the Central Belt and the availability of horse and rider accommodation and services will need to be investigated further.
- 6.6.15 ***Recommendation 12. SNH and the respective access authorities should explore the potential for establishing and promoting The Great Scottish Ride – a long distance horse riding and mountain biking route(s) from the Border (Pennine Bridleway) to Killin, with potential extensions to enable return rides to the Central Belt on the proposed Heart of Scotland Circular Ride or 'epic rides' to Loch Ness.***

The Great Scottish Ride and associated proposals may be progressed through a Riding Routes Working Group established as part of the Longer Distance Routes Forum recommended in section 7.5.

6.6.16 In addition to the proposed route for the Great Scottish Ride –

- several riding loops are suggested - to enhance the day ride potential of parts of this route, or to provide variety for longer distance out-and-return rides.
- a route from Killin to Loch Ness and the Trail of the 7 Lochs could be promoted as an ‘**epic ride**’, including on remoter hill and valley routes. This ride would not be waymarked and would provide a sense of challenge for experienced riders.

*Table 6.7 Suggested Great Scottish Ride – illustrative route, options and extensions*

Potential Route (incl. corridors for route search + route options)	Availability of routes	Distance (approx. km)
<b>Great Scottish Ride: Scottish Border to Killin</b>		
<b>Pennine Bridleway - Hawick</b> (loop) a. South section: Byrness-Keilder-B6357-Hawick b. North section: Byrness-Cheviots-Jedburgh-Hawick [loop rides at Hawick and Jedburgh]	North section of Pennine Bridleway to be developed a. Border Country Ride routes through Kielder Forest, South of Scotland Countryside Trails (SoSCT) via Bloody Bush and Waverley Way to Hawick b. Border Country Ride, SoSCT, Cheviot Paths, Jedburgh-Hawick Link, Hawick Circular Riding Route	55-60
<b>Hawick - Pentlands</b> Hawick-Ashkirk-Innerleithen-Peebles-West Linton-Pentlands (Cauldstone Slap)-Harperrig [loop rides at: Ettrickbridge, Traquair, Peebles, Eddleston and West Linton].	Buccleuch Rides, SoSCT, including Minch Moor Road, Tweedale Path Network and Cross Borders Drove Road. Cauldstone Slap across Pentland Hills	70-75
<b>Pentlands - Hillend Reservoir</b> (Caldercruix) a. Harperrig-Little Vantage-E. Calder-Livingston-Clyde to Forth Cycle Route-Hillend; or b. Harperrig-Tarbrax-Bughtknowe; Bughtknowe-Fauldhouse-Blackridge-Clyde to Forth Cycle Route-Hillend; or c. Harperrig-Forth-Newmains-Salsburgh-Hillend	Optional routes/corridors for route search are illustrative and require detailed investigation. Suggestions are based on rights of way, existing routes and other information from Central Scotland Forest Trust.	35-55
<b>Hillend Reservoir - Kirkintilloch</b> a. Hillend-Palacerigg Country Park-Cumbernauld- <u>missing link</u> to Kirkintilloch; b. Hillend-Coatbridge-Drumpellier Country Park- <u>missing link</u> to Kirkintilloch	Optional routes are illustrative and require detailed investigation. Suggestions are based on rights of way, existing routes and other information from Central Scotland Forest Trust.	25-35
<b>Kirkintilloch - Drymen</b> Kirkintilloch-Strathblane-Drymen	Strathkelvin Railway Path, West Highland Way; or Water Road around Campsies, Killearn-Drymen link	25
<b>Drymen - Killin</b> a. Drymen-Aberfoyle-Callander-Locheearnhead-Killin	Rob Roy Way/NCN7 or Loch Ard Forest routes to Aberfoyle, Rob Roy Way or Achray Forest routes to Callander, Rob Roy Way to Killin (some locked gates)	55-60
<b>Great Scottish Ride – total distance</b>		<b>265-310</b>

*Table 6.8 Potential ‘epic ride’ extensions to suggested Great Scottish Ride*

Potential Route (corridors for search + options)	Availability of routes	Distance
<b>Potential Northern Extension to the Great Scottish Ride</b> (to provide ‘epic ride’ - not managed or promoted as longer distance route)		
<b>Epic Ride: Killin to Loch Ness</b> Killin-Glen Lochay-Loch Lyon-Bridge of Orchy-West Highland Way-Kingshouse-Rannoch Station-Corrour-Loch Treig- a. Spean Bridge-Great Glen Way-Fort Augustus-Trail of 7 Lochs b. Loch Laggan (Ardverikie Estate)-Laggan-Corrieyairack Pass-L. Ness/Trail of 7 Lochs	Not recommended as a promoted and formal route. Potential route for self-sufficient, highly experienced riders. Mix of minor roads, Heritage Paths, rights of way, estate roads and cycle paths. No/few services on extensive sections. Requires fuller investigations as to options	215-225
<b>Circuit of Loch Ness</b> Fort-Augustus-Trail of Seven Lochs-Inverness-Drumnadrochit-Invermoriston-Fort Augustus	Mix of proposed NCN route on east side of Loch Ness, riding routes, forest roads and Great Glen Way. Requires investigation of route and alternative to main road section of Gt. Glen Way east of Drumnadrochit	75

Note: Distances are approximate, rounded to nearest 5 km and are map distances: distance on ground will be higher

6.6.17 Two further longer distance riding circuits are recommended for further assessment (Table 6.9) –

- a. **Heart of Scotland Circular Ride** ('working title') – starting at Callander, or any of the other towns and villages, and using the Rob Roy Way, hill and valley paths and tracks, rights of way and core paths
- b. **Moray Country and Coast Circular Ride** – provided by linking the Dava Way Ride – from Grantown-on-Spey to Forres, the Moray Coast Trail (or alternative paths, including part of the Cullen-Garmouth Cycle Route) – from Forres to Spey Bay, and the Speyside Way – providing return route to Grantown-on-Spey. This route would be approximately 140 km. Opportunities are readily available to extend rides to Aviemore and Laggan, Tomintoul and Glenlivet Estate routes, the Cabrach and along the Moray Coast. The Dava Way Ride and shorter riding routes on the Moray Coast are already being promoted by the Moray Equestrian Access Group.

*Table 6.9 Potential Heart of Scotland and Moray Circular Rides*

<b>Potential Route</b> (incl. corridors for route search + route options)	<b>Availability of routes</b>	<b>Distance</b> (approx. km)
<b>Heart of Scotland Circular Ride</b> Callander – Killin –Crieff - Auchterarder – Hillfoot Villages – Callander	Rob Roy Way to Killin, Killin to Comrie by Glen Lednock – challenging, exposed hill tracks with no path over 1-2 km between Meall Diamh and Ruadh Mheal, Comrie to Crieff on disused railway/other paths along R. Earn. Core paths to Auchterarder, through Glen Devon and along Hillfoots to Bridge of Allen, proposed Stirling-Callander path. Route requires further assessment	135
<b>Moray Country and Coast Circular Ride</b> Grantown-on-Spey – Forres – Findhorn – Lossiemouth – Spey Bay – Fochabers - Aberlour	Dava Way Ride, Moray Coastal Trail, Speyside Way. Circuit requires further assessment, improvements and detours to sustain riding, remove locked gates, etc.. Link to Tomintoul and Around the Cabrach Riding Route	140

Note: Missing links on these suggested routes will require further assessment and negotiations.

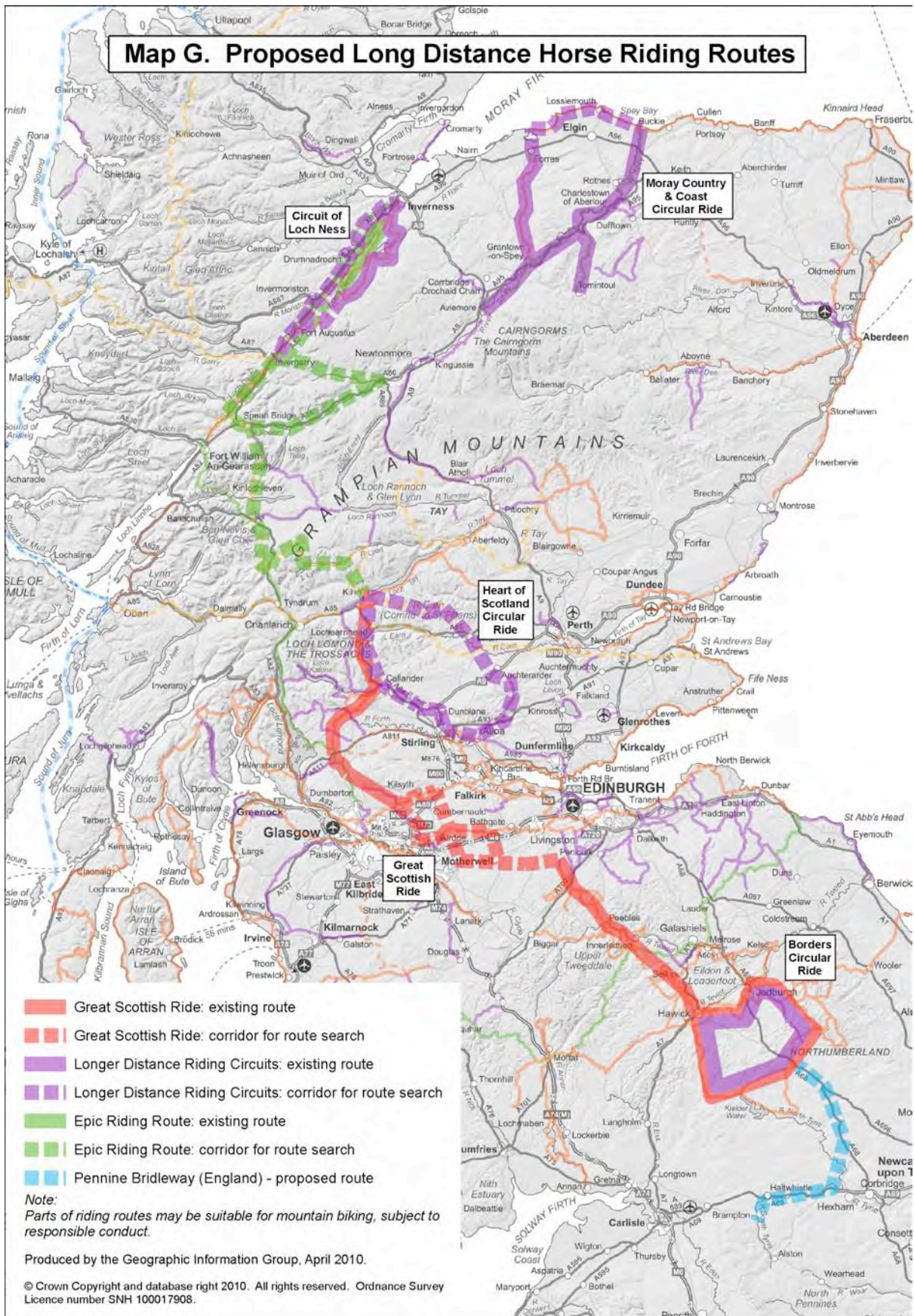
6.6.18 **Recommendation 13. The respective access authorities should jointly assess the feasibility of developing and promoting –**

- a. **the Heart of Scotland Circular Ride**
  - b. **the Moray Country and Coast Circular Ride**
- as illustrated in Table 6.9.**

6.6.19 The majority of the routes mentioned in this section will require detailed assessments to ensure their ability to sustain riding use and to identify actions required to improve and maintain surfaces, enhance the safety of road crossings, provide suitable routes through settlements, and replace locked gates with rider-friendly gates or other arrangements. Landowners' agreement to route signing, improvements and maintenance will be required for many sections of these proposed routes.



# Map G. Proposed Long Distance Horse Riding Routes



## 6.7 Canoe trails

### *Background*

- 6.7.1 Canoeing, sea kayaking and other paddlesports (e.g. rafting, rowing) are growing in popularity as day trip and tourism activities. While no national data are available specifically for paddle-sports trips in Scotland, it has been estimated that there are around 2,000-2,500 such trips through the Great Glen each year and that this amount is growing by 25% each year. These paddlers' expenditures are estimated at over £0.7m/year and to be growing by £0.2m per year (Rob Robinson Heritage Consulting, 2008). Further east, the main part of the River Spey attracted 5,607 paddlers in 2003 (Glasgow Caledonia University, 2004) and this level of activity is likely to be increasing with growth in the sport and in canoe-based tourism.
- 6.7.2 Northern Ireland has led the development of canoe trails within the UK, with the development of five canoe trails on inland waters and proposals for a further river and lough trail and three coastal canoe trails. The Countryside Access and Activities Network has progressed the development of these trails and defines a canoe trail as:
- A scenically attractive route along a stretch of water suitable for paddlers in kayaks or canoes, with facilities on shore that allow for overnights stays.*
- The current trails vary in length - from the Blackwater (20 km), Lough Erne (50 km) and Lower Bann (58 km) to the Lough Neagh (150 km shoreline) and Strangford Lough (140 km) Canoe Trails.
- 6.7.3 In addition to typical facilities offered by land-based trails, the canoe trails offer jetties, slipways, canoe steps, toilets, with showers, bothy accommodation and hazard and information signing. The costs of establishing each trail have varied from around £48,000 to £154,000, excluding the costs of the website [www.canoeni.com](http://www.canoeni.com).

### *Development of canoe trails in Scotland*

- 6.7.4 For the purposes of this report the term **Canoe Trail** is used as shorthand for trails on inland or coastal waters intended for use by the range of paddlesports users, insofar as water and weather conditions permit.
- 6.7.5 A large number of canoe trails are promoted in guidebooks (e.g. *Scottish Canoe Touring – A SCA Canoe and Kayak Guide*) and on websites, including the 380 km Scottish Sea Kayak Trail from Gigha to Ullapool ([www.scottishseakayaktrail.com](http://www.scottishseakayaktrail.com)). The **Great Glen Canoe Trail** will be Scotland's first 'official' canoe trail. Development of this 96 km trail is scheduled to start in 2010 and estimated to cost just over £0.6m, with 45% ERDF funding. The project is being led by a Project Officer employed by British Waterways and its management partners will be British Waterways, Forestry Commission Scotland and the Great Glen Ranger Service (Highland Council), with support from SNH and the Scottish Canoe Association. In addition to signing, information and shore-based amenities (e.g. parking, picnic places, toilets, interpretation), the Canoe Trail will have five Trailblazer's Rests, with timber shelters, low key informal campsites, fire pits and composting toilets, and canoe hitching points (i.e. secure canoe 'parking' points).
- 6.7.6 Research and consultations during this study have provided suggestions for a considerable number of canoe trails and several of the strongest 'candidates' for development are assessed briefly below. Potential open water sea kayak trails (e.g. Scottish Sea Kayak Trail) have been omitted from this assessment, as it is suggested that these remain as opportunities for 'epic journeys' – to be planned and undertaken by experienced, self-sufficient, sea kayakers to locations and under conditions of their choice, using their experience and skills; rather than being widely promoted, including to paddlers with limited experience of Scottish conditions.

6.7.7 Given this early stage in the development of canoe trails in Scotland and that paddle-sports are still a minority activity (cf. walking, cycling), but one that growing in scale, the assessments in this report focus on the potential for canoe trails, which can be provided relatively economically, on waters suitable for most paddlers (i.e. Grade 1 and 2 waters), with few physical hazards, and which are unlikely to meet major resistance from riparian owners and anglers. Consideration has been given, also, to proximity to major centres of population, to reduce travel requirements.

6.7.8 Based on these assessments (Table 6.10) and in recognition of the potential benefits of monitoring and learning lessons from a few canoe trails, it suggested that priority be given to developing a further three trails in different contexts, before rolling out a wider canoe trails programme.

6.7.9 **Recommendation 14. In addition to the Great Glen Canoe Trail, priority should be given to developing the following canoe trails over the next 5 years, subject to positive feasibility assessments and available funding, -**

- **Forth-Clyde/Union Canals Canoe Trail**      • **River Tweed Canoe Trail**
- **Loch Lomond Canoe Trail.**

**The development, marketing and use of these trails should be monitored to provide guidance for any further programmes for canoe trail development.**

Table 6.10 Potential canoe trails – summary assessment

Potential Canoe Trail Location	Length/ Days kms, days	Suitability of waters (esp. for less experienced)	Existing Facilities	Proximity to population/ tourism centres	Potential support/ opposition	Scenic and other interests	Priority for development /promotion	Comments
<b>Forth-Clyde/ Union Canals</b>	103, 2	+++ Flat, some portages	+++	+++	+++	++	+++	Canals link Glasgow, Central Belt towns, Edinburgh, Forth and Clyde. Existing services, attractions (Helix, Falkirk Wheel) and management. Some less attractive sections. Portages around locks
<b>River Spey</b>	114, 2½	++ Grade 1 + some rapids	++	+++	++/~~~	+++	++	Attractive river and wildlife. Good services. Current use and support from canoeists, but likely opposition from land-owners/angling interests to Trail promotion. Core path status subject to inquiries (2009). Some low waters.
<b>River Dee</b>	105, 3-4	+ / ++ Grade 1 + some rapids, variable levels	+	+++	~~~	+++	+	Attractive river, but low water levels at times. Limited shore-based amenities. Potentially high opposition from land-owners/angling interests to Trail promotion
<b>River Tay +/- Loch Tay</b>	75 (+/- 25)	++ Grades 1, 2 + some rapids	++	+++	~	+++	++	Attractive river/loch. Good water levels and 2 sets of challenging rapids (or portages). Good facilities. Limited landowner opposition to managed access. Possible angling opposition
<b>River Tweed</b>	110, 3-4	++ Grades 1, 2 + weirs/rapids variable levels	++	+++	++ / ~	+++	+++	Attractive river + historic/ cultural interests. Low water at times to Coldstream and weirs may require portages. Local support for Canoe Trail concept, but possible land-owner/angling opposition. Could attract users from N. England.



Table 6.10 Potential canoe trails – summary assessment (continued)

Potential Canoe Trail Location	Length/ Days kms, days	Suitability of waters (esp. for less experienced)	Existing Facilities	Proximity to population/ tourism centres	Potential support/ opposition	Scenic and other interests	Priority for development /promotion	Comments
River Clyde – Upper/Lower	78/72	+ /++ Grades 1, 2 + some weirs variable levels	++	++/+++	+	+++ /++	++	Wildlife and historic interests - especially Upper Clyde. Some lower sections less attractive. Close to urban centres. Upper sections difficult during low water. Low tourism; high day trip potential
Loch Lomond	72 (round the Loch)	++ not graded, waters variable	+++	+++	++	+++	+++	Attractive scenery, wildlife and islands. Good, varied facilities/services. Near Glasgow. Attractive to tourists. Loch ranger service. Needs care in changeable weather. Potential for 3-4 lochs trip, but requires transport
Loch Awe	72 (round the Loch)	++ not graded, waters variable	-	-	+	+++	+	Attractive scenery and historic features. Quiet, undisturbed loch. Limited parking and access to shores /waters and few facilities. Requires care in changeable/windy weather.
River Ken, Loch Ken, River Dee	77/83	+ /++ Grades 1, 2, rapids; variable levels on R. Ken	loch: ++ rivers: +	+	+	+++	+	Attractive, peaceful lowland scenery and wildlife. Upper stretches have periods of low water when Hydro plant operating. Could attract users from Northern England. Limited shore facilities.

Acknowledgement. Much of this information has been drawn from the SCA's *Scottish Canoe Touring* guidebook (Palmer, 2009).

6.7.10 The Forth-Clyde and Loch Lomond Canoe Trails will provide important resources for Central Scotland and the River Tweed Trail for Southern Scotland, with the Great Glen Trail serving the Highlands. Rivers Spey and Tay may be priority candidates for any future canoe trails programme. The Crinan Canal is too short to provide a credible longer distance canoe trail, but along with the Forth-Clyde/Union Canals Canoe rail and Great Glen Canoe Trails could provide an important link in 'epic journeys' across and around Scotland – e.g. a Five Firths 'epic journey' by sea kayak, starting on the River Tay or River Spey and encompassing the Firths of Tay, Forth, Clyde and Lorne and the Moray Firth.

## 6.8 Themed routes

### *Background and assessment*

6.8.1 For the purposes of this report, a *themed route* is considered to be a recognised and managed route with a unique identity and focus, based on a specific topic, which underpins and unifies the planning, information, interpretation and marketing of the route. Themes may relate to specific aspects of the natural heritage, cultural or contemporary history, literary associations, or the produce of an area. 'Stories' relating to the themes may be conveyed along the route, through signing (e.g. Catevan Trail's carved Catevans' heads on waymarking posts), interpretative displays, publications, websites, podcasts and events (e.g. outdoor theatre).

6.8.2 The desk research and feed-back from route managers has revealed that –

- a. few longer distance routes are directly associated with a theme – most take their titles from their locations (e.g. Ayrshire Coastal Path, Formatine to Buchan Way). Amongst those with some form of theme conveyed in their title are –
  - Borders Abbeys Way
  - Catevan Trail
  - John Muir Way
  - Rob Roy Way
  - St. Cuthbert's Way.

- b. interpretation on longer distance routes, and in publications and websites, tends to be site-based and seldom communicates a unified 'story' along the route
  - c. only a few longer distance routes have an effective interpretative plan or framework, underpinned by a theme.
- 6.8.3 Due to the limited extent of themeing and lack of information on themes associated with specific routes - as opposed to *ad hoc* site-based interpretation, it has proved impossible to categorise, or to assess the extent of, the current themeing of longer distance routes. It is evident, however, that –
- a. the enjoyment of longer distance routes, individually and collectively, and their roles in 'showcasing' and assisting appreciation and understanding of some of the best and most interesting elements of our landscapes, wildlife, history and culture, could be greatly increased through the development and implementation of theme-based interpretation plans and programmes for individual route
  - b. themeing can create interest in, and strengthen the marketing of, individual routes.
- 6.8.4 A wealth of potential themes could be developed in respect of longer distance routes. Just a few examples of potential topics, and themes relating to these, include -
- a. history – Viking incursions and settlements, and Scotland's kings and queens
  - b. heritage routes and their historical and social importance – Roman roads, drove roads, General Wade's roads and pilgrims routes (see below)
  - c. literary associations – a Kidnapped Trail.
  - d. wildlife – journey of the salmon, from spawning to sea, including predators and produce.
- 6.8.5 ***Recommendation 15. Access authorities should review the potential for strengthening the themeing and interpretation of longer distance routes.***

#### *Pilgrims routes*

- 6.8.6 Pilgrims routes are one type of themed route and are often of international fame and interest (e.g. pilgrimage routes to Santiago de Compostela). There has been increasing interest amongst religious groups and scholars in the development of such routes in Scotland. At SNH's request, the consultant considered the potential contributions of existing and proposed longer distance routes to the potential development of a **Pilgrims Way** from St. Andrews to Iona. More detailed assessments have been undertaken by SNH's staff, who have taken the availability of core paths, rights of way and other local paths into account. Such a wider investigation was outwith the scope of this research.
- 6.8.7 Assessments of potential coast-to-coast routes, including optional routes from Fife to Loch Lomond and the West, Fife to Oban via the Trossachs, and Fife to Oban via Highland Perthshire, were assessed as part of the identification of strategic route opportunities in section 6.3 and Table 6.2. No routes were assessed through Central Fife and Central Perthshire, as no east-west longer distance routes or significant link routes were identified in these areas during the audit stage of this research. The assessments of the former routes demonstrate that –
- current longer distance routes, or those at an advanced stage of planning or development (e.g. Kings Highway, Stirling-Callander Route) are only available for a southern route, via Stirling, as far as Tyndrum
  - no longer distance routes, or longer link routes, were identified beyond Tyndrum to Oban, or through Mull to Iona. If the Rob Roy Way comprises part of the preferred route, then the proposed Killin-Tyndrum link route (£2.5m estimated cost) would be required.

6.8.8 From Craignure across Mull to Fionnphort, the A849 is heavily trafficked during the tourist season and would not provide an enjoyable cycling or walking experience. No alternative longer distance paths are available. Additionally, Iona's Abbey, other religious sites and visitor services are reported as being at capacity at peak periods and further visits may detract from visitors' enjoyment and spiritual experience.

6.8.9 **Recommendation 16. Proposals for a Pilgrims Way from St. Andrews to Iona are premature and should not be supported in the short-/medium-terms, due to the lack of longer distance routes over much of the western section of the proposed route and issues of visitor capacity on Iona.**

In the longer-term, if missing links in the longer distance route network between Killin and Oban are resolved and local path networks are further developed on Mull, these proposals may be reconsidered, but issues of visitor capacity on Iona are likely to remain a constraint.

6.8.10 A **St. Andrew's Way** from Edinburgh to St. Andrews has been researched (Cameron Black, 2009) and several other routes have been suggested by researchers and interested parties. The route of the proposed St. Andrew's Way, through Ceres, Falkland, Scotlandwell, Dunfermline and North and South Queensferry would use local paths rather than current longer distance routes, but is considered practical. SNH have identified a parallel route slightly further north through Central Fife.

6.8.11 Initial considerations of the concept and route corridor for a St. Andrews Way, indicate that –

- a. the proposals are practical and may be achieved economically - using existing core paths and other paths. Also, the Kingdom of Fife Millennium Cycle Routes could provide an alternative **St. Andrew's Cycleway**
- b. the length, convenience of this route from Edinburgh and, in particular, its religious and historical associations could provide significant domestic and international market appeal
- c. development of the south-north section of this route, from Edinburgh to Falkland, would provide a significant section of a future route from Edinburgh to Perth and Scone – an important missing link in the national network of longer distance routes. From Falkland, the route could use existing paths and minor roads to join the proposed extension of the Fife Coastal Path/Round the Tay route from Newburgh to Perth and local paths to Scone Palace. The Scone to Dunfermline section could be linked, via Culross and the Round the Forth Cycle Route, to Stirling and be themed as the **Queens Highway**.

6.8.12 **Recommendation 17. The respective access authorities should assess the feasibility of developing –**

- a. **a pilgrims way - the St. Andrew's Way/Cycleway - from Edinburgh to St. Andrews**
- b. **a historically themed Queens Highway from Scone to Stirling, by Falkland, Loch Leven and Dunfermline.**

## 6.9 'Greening' of longer distance route corridors

6.9.1 Green networks provides multiple benefits to society and the environment, including its contributions to amenity, recreation, urban regeneration, landscape renewal, the rural economy, biodiversity, mitigation of climate change, clean air, health and wellbeing, and sustainable development.



6.9.2 Traditionally, longer distance route programmes and investment have focussed on the infrastructure directly associated with a route (e.g. surfaces, drainage, signage). Increasingly, attention is being given to the wider route corridor, as part of the green networks through which the route passes. Indeed, the ‘greening’ of recreational route corridors, through landscape and habitat improvement schemes and associated projects, is central to the work of Scotland’s greenspace and countryside trusts, including the recently established Central Scotland Green Network. Such approaches should extend to all longer distance routes.

6.9.3 ***Recommendation 18. Access authorities and partner organisations with responsibilities for longer distance routes should be encouraged to recognise the potential contributions of the route corridors to green networks and undertake actions to enhance the landscape, biodiversity and related values of these corridors.***

## **6.10 Promoting the use of public transport services by longer distance route users**

6.10.1 A key objective of longer distance routes is to promote active travel, as this can contribute to users’ health and well-being and encourage sustainable lifestyles. However, users of longer distance routes may have to travel considerable distances to the start, and/or from the end, of their walk, cycle or horse ride. Private transport will often be the transport mode of necessity for riders and their horses, but public transport services can enable walkers and cyclists, and especially overseas visitors and others without ready access to a car, –

- a. to reach the start, or end, point of a longer distance route
- b. to complete a route in sections, returning home, or to overnight accommodation, each day or at the end a multi-day trip
- c. to undertake a one-way journey of whatever length, without requiring a car at both ends.

6.10.2 To encourage the use of public transport services will require –

- a. the availability of convenient services, at times to suit outwards and/or return journeys and at locations which are conveniently situated in relation to the route
- b. provision on trains and buses for the carriage of cycles by individuals and family or other groups
- c. information on transport services, which is readily accessible both for pre-trip planning and within the destination area (e.g. links to travel information from long distance route websites, information at TICs, in accommodation and at bus stops)
- d. route managers to ensure that any public transport information they provide in publications or websites is kept up-to-date.

Additionally, route managers and others may actively promote the use of longer distance routes by working with transport operators to provide and promote special fare offers or other promotions (cf. Tyne Valley Train Trails promoted by Hadrian’s Wall Path National Trail).

6.10.3 ***Recommendation 19. Longer distance route managing organisations should work with public transport operators to provide information on, and promote the use of, public transport services for access to/from longer distance routes and ensure the availability and convenience of such services for route users.***



## 7. FRAMEWORK FOR COLLABORATIVE ACTION ON LONGER DISTANCE ROUTES

### 7.1 Towards a framework for joint action on longer distance routes

- 7.1.1 Section 5 outlined a Vision and strategic directions for the future development and marketing of the longer distance routes network and section 6 identified ways of strengthening and enhancing the network and individual routes 'on the ground'. In many cases, collaborative action between organisations with management responsibilities for longer distance routes, supported by wider interests (e.g. communities, user groups, tourism businesses), will be vital to progress these recommendations. This section discusses and presents recommendations for –
- a. brand development and joint marketing of the longer distance routes network
  - b. a national paths and routes database
  - c. minimum standards and a quality assurance scheme
  - d. a national framework for planning, managing and marketing the route network
  - e. funding and other support for longer distance route programmes
  - f. an action programme to progress the recommendations within this report.

### 7.2 Brand development and joint marketing of the longer distance routes network

#### *Brand development*

- 7.2.1 Creation of a strong, unique brand identity, based on agreed brand values, will be essential for the effective marketing of Scotland's longer distance routes – especially in UK and international markets. Examples, of well-know brands for similar products include the UK-wide *National Cycle Network*, England's *National Trails* and New Zealand's *Great Walks*.
- 7.2.2 As many of Scotland's longer distance routes have the term *Way* in their titles, *Scottish Ways* could be a potential brand name, but this could conflict with *ScotWays* – the Scottish Rights of Way and Access Society's abbreviated title and brand. *Trails* is a term used internationally, but while *Scottish Trails* could provide a strong brand title, its abbreviation to *ScotTrails* could conflict with the *ScotRail* brand. The thistle is the mapping and waymarking symbol for the designated LDRs, but *Thistle Trails* may convey a sense of discomfort!
- 7.2.3 ***Recommendation 20. Professional advice on brand development should be obtained and brand proposals tested, as part of a wider joint marketing programme for the longer distance route network and to provide an effective framework for promoting individual routes.***

#### *Joint marketing of longer distance routes*

- 7.2.4 Investment in the joint marketing of the longer distance route network - and possibly groups of routes at a regional or local level - can provide economies of scale and strengthen the national and international marketing of routes, enhance the extent and quality of website and published information, and extend the reach of promotional activity (e.g. representation at outdoor shows and events). The effective targeting of walking, cycling and riding activity visitor markets will be essential, especially as VisitScotland has reoriented its marketing programmes from activity markets to focus on more complex market segments based on age, socio-economic and holiday behaviour characteristics.

7.2.5 The Internet will be the principal source of pre-trip information for visitors seeking information on a destination area and available activities, visitor services and routes. VisitScotland has indicated that its *WalkingScotland* and *CyclingScotland* websites receive around 70,000 and 20,000 visits per month, respectively (pers. com., 2009). However, while these and other websites, especially the *walkhighlands* and Long Distance Walkers Association's websites, present information on longer distance routes, none provides comprehensive information on all the principal longer distance routes, or links to their individual websites. Indeed, information on individual routes is often 'hidden' in the respective local authority's website or that of another organisation, and may not be readily accessible to those undertaking an on-line search – especially if they are not acquainted with the local area.

7.2.6 There is obvious need for a portal website for all of Scotland's longer distance routes and, preferably, for the wider network of recognised paths and routes (e.g. core paths, asserted public rights of way, cycleways). The design of any such website should take account of users' increasingly sophisticated requirements and expectations and provide route information and reviews, interactive maps, multi-media route cards and GPS waypoints, a discussion forum, podcasts and links to accommodation, public transport and other visitor services websites.

7.2.7 ***Recommendation 21. An easily accessible website should be developed and maintained to provide information on, and promote awareness and use of, Scotland's longer distance route network and the wider network of paths and routes, and as a portal to the websites of individual routes.***

***Recommendation 22. Each longer distance route should have its own website/webpage, which should be kept under review to ensure its accessibility and to maintain up-to-date and high quality information.***

### **7.3 National paths and routes database**

7.3.1 Research for this report has illustrated significant shortfalls in the extent, quality and accessibility of data on longer distance routes and other paths held nationally (e.g. by SNH) and by individual access authorities and other route managing organisations. Such data, including detailed maps of routes and information on the accessibility of sections of routes for different types of user (e.g. disabled users, horse riders), are essential to support the planning, management and marketing of the route network and individual routes.

7.3.2 ***Recommendation 23. A national database of longer distance routes, core paths and other routes recognised by access authorities, should be developed and maintained to support access planning, management and marketing.***

If the development of a comprehensive paths and routes database is not feasible, then a database of longer distance routes should be established. This database should include interactive maps of the route network and individual routes and be readily accessible on-line to route managers and the wider public.

### **7.4 Minimum standards and quality assurance scheme**

7.4.1 If Scotland's longer distance routes are to continue to attract local, UK and international visitors and compete in increasingly challenging activity and adventure tourism markets, they must be able to provide a high standard product, with the best routes being world-class. With the exception of the designated LDRs, there are no minimum standards or quality assurance measures in place to encourage and ensure quality provision across the longer distance route network.

7.4.2 **Recommendation 24. Minimum standards for longer distance routes should be established and verified through a network-wide quality assurance scheme.**

**Recommendation 25. Investment and marketing programmes should give priority to assisting routes to achieve the minimum standards and support those which are quality assured.**

7.4.3 Appendix C sets out *Criteria for Successful Longer Distance Routes*. These criteria may assist the development of minimum standards. Topics of potential relevance to the establishment of minimum standards are illustrated in Table 7.1.

*Table 7.1 Suggested topics to include in minimum standards for longer distance routes*

Potential Topics for Minimum Standards	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• safety and risk assessment procedures</li> <li>• attractiveness of scenery and other features</li> <li>• surfaces which are fit for purpose</li> <li>• information, signing and waymarking</li> <li>• availability of facilities and services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• continuity, coherence and definition of route</li> <li>• accessibility - by range of user types and abilities</li> <li>• access - by public and private transport</li> <li>• management and monitoring arrangements</li> </ul>

7.4.4 Any minimum standards and quality assurance scheme should retain an element of flexibility to recognise variations in the context and users of routes and may be developed in combination with a route grading scheme. A simple grading scheme should underpin information on each route and enable users to understand its characteristics and the type of experience they can expect.

7.4.5 Table 7.2 illustrates a possible grading scheme and draws on elements of Forestry Commission Scotland's grading scheme, as used in its forest park and other leaflets. The different grades may be identified graphically on information leaflets and website by, for example, an illustration of a single boot for an easy walk, and three boots for a strenuous walk and gradings may apply to walking, cycling, riding or disabled access on a land-based route, or grades of difficulty on canoe routes.

*Table 7.2 Illustration of a potential grading scheme for longer distance routes*

Easy	Moderate	Strenuous	Epic
sensible footwear 'muscle loosener' all ages and abilities most bikes all horse riders all/most sections suitable for less able users few outdoor skills	waterproof footwear 'muscle stretcher' most ages, basic fitness hybrid/mountain bikes most horse riders all/many sections suitable for less able users basic navigation and outdoor skills required	hill-walking boots 'muscle builder' most ages, fit mountain bikes fit, experienced horse riders sections may be unsuitable for less able moderate navigation and outdoor skills required	hill-walking boots 'muscle strainer' most ages, very fit rugged mountain bikes very fit, experienced riders route/sections unsuitable for less able users high level of navigation and outdoor skills required

Note: Epic routes are not recommended for promotion within the longer distance routes network

7.4.6 Participation in, and continuing to fulfil the requirements of, the quality assurance scheme should be a pre-requisite for –

- a. inclusion within a branded network of longer distance routes
- b. participation in network-wide marketing initiatives (e.g. portal website, joint promotions at outdoor shows).

A quality assurance scheme will require the initial assessment and regular monitoring of routes. This may be undertaken by a lead agency (e.g. SNH, Paths for All Partnership), a partnership of the route management bodies (see s. 7.5), or a voluntary body (e.g. Scotways, Ramblers Association Scotland) acting in a voluntary capacity, or working to a contract.

### *Text Box 7.1 Northern Ireland's activity websites and Quality Walks scheme*

Northern Ireland's Countryside Access and Activities Network (CAAN) is the lead body for the strategic development, management and promotion of outdoor recreation in Northern Ireland. It comprises representatives of public, voluntary and commercial interests with interests and involvement in outdoor recreation and has a small staff team. CAAN has played leading roles in promoting activity information at a country-wide scale and developing walking, cycling, riding and canoe trails.

CAAN has developed 'state of the art' activity websites – e.g. [www.WalkNI.com](http://www.WalkNI.com), [www.CanoeNI.com](http://www.CanoeNI.com). Its *WalkNI* website, for example, provides a location map and information sheets for a large number of short, medium and long walks, walkers' feed-back, live weather forecasts, 'leave no trace' guidance, tourist information, links to walking holiday and accommodation providers, an events calendar and related information.

Promoted walks are assessed and accredited through a Quality Walks Scheme, supported by the Northern Ireland Environment Agency and Northern Ireland Tourist Board. Assessments are undertaken by trained volunteers and Quality Walks are identified by a 'Quality Stamp' (waymark disk) at the start and finish of the walk and on the *WalkNI* website. Assessments include consideration of –

- trailhead/walk start point – availability of car parking, toilets and walk information
- the walk – signage and extent and types of off-road and on-road walking
- visitor attraction – scenic attractiveness of the walk and its appeal to tourists.

## **7.5 A national framework for planning, managing and marketing the longer distance route network**

7.5.1 Recent advocacy for a Scottish Coastal Way and for a Pilgrims Way has highlighted the lack of any overall strategic framework within which user demands, the enhancement of the longer distance routes network and priorities for investment in routes can be considered and assessed. While this report will contribute information and guidance to support any future strategy and/or investment programme for longer distance routes, it is suggested that a simple partnership framework – in the form of a **Longer Distance Routes Forum** (or similar group) – is required to bring together key stakeholders in the longer distance network, including public authorities and agencies, access interest and user groups, and land management interests. This Forum's remit could be to provide strategic guidance and promote joint initiatives to strengthen, sustain and promote Scotland's longer distance route network.

7.5.2 ***Recommendation 26. A Longer Distance Routes Forum should be established and comprise a voluntary partnership of route managers and other interests, with the remit of providing a strategic overview, guidance and support for the integrated planning, management and marketing of the longer distance route network.***

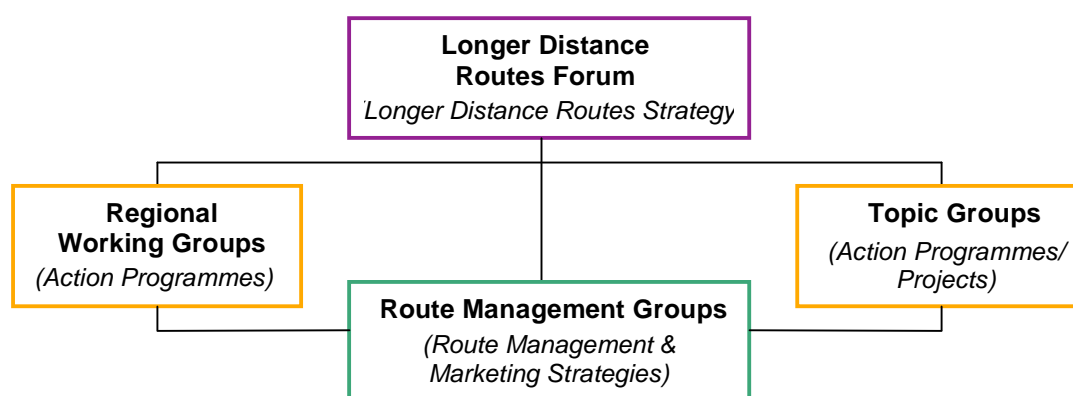
7.5.3 While the Forum would act as the hub for a national partnership, it may be supported by regional or topic groups, as illustrated in Figure 7.1. Key components of the suggested partnership structure are –

- a. Longer Distance Routes Forum** – key stakeholders may meet 2- to 4-times each year, under the leadership of SNH or another partner organisation, to foster liaison and partnership working, share good practice and support, develop guidance, progress joint initiatives (e.g. market research, joint website) and develop and agree a brief **national longer distance routes strategy**, which would feed into national strategies for transportation, walking, cycling, tourism, etc. and guide national investment priorities



- b. **Regional Working Groups** – these may cover, for example, the Highlands, Islands and North East, Central Scotland and Southern Scotland, or the strategic development plan areas. They would be tasked with preparing **regional longer distance routes action plans**, which would focus on filling gaps and strengthening the network. The action plans would feed into the proposed national longer distance routes strategy, strategic development plans, regional transport strategies, local plans and core paths plans
- c. **Topic Groups** – specific topic groups (e.g. riding routes group, marketing group) may meet for a defined period, to develop **topic action plans or initiatives**
- d. **Route Management Groups** - partnership groups for each longer distance route should prepare and keep under review a brief **longer distance route management and marketing strategy** (cf. strategies prepared for the designated LDRs); thereby, strengthening the policy, implementation and investment framework for each route.

Figure 7.1 Suggested strategic partnership structure for the longer distance route network



7.5.4 **Recommendation 27.** *An informal partnership-based Management Group should be established to guide and support the further development, management and marketing of each longer distance route, assist the preparation of a brief route management and marketing strategy, and keep the implementation of this strategy under review.*

## 7.6 Longer distance routes coordinator and ‘quick win’ actions

7.6.1 The recommendations outlined throughout this report, including the national partnership framework outlined above, will require leadership and coordination to plan and ensure progress and to secure partnership support and funding. SNH is perhaps best placed to provide this leadership and coordination.

7.6.2 **Recommendation 28.** *SNH should identify a member of staff as Longer Distance Routes Coordinator to progress the recommendations in this report. This Coordinator should give initial priority to achieving a series of ‘quick win’ actions, to be agreed with Longer Distance Routes Forum and progressed with the Forum’s support.*

7.6.3 Examples of potential ‘quick win’ actions to be taken forward by the Coordinator could include –

- preparing and consulting on a national longer distance routes strategy
- establishing a collective website for the longer distance route network
- further developing a longer distance routes database
- progressing 3 or more of the recommended longer distance circular trails, based on existing longer distance routes

- progressing priority sections of the Scottish Coastal Way, The Great Scottish Ride and Forth-Clyde/Union Canals and Loch Lomond Canoe Trails.

## 7.7 Funding and other support for the longer distance routes network

### *Funding of longer distance routes*

- 7.7.1 Progress on the further development and marketing of the long distance routes network will require both capital and revenue funding. Much of the costs will be borne by the respective access authorities and will be dependent on financial support from the Scottish Government through the Single Outcome Agreements. Current constraints on public sector spending are likely to restrict the availability of funding to progress the future development of the route network. This has been taken into account in preparing the illustrative action programme in section 7.8.
- 7.7.2 As demonstrated in section 2.3, investment in longer distance routes and associated programmes can help to ‘deliver’ a wide range of social, economic and environmental benefits. For example, recreational and other physical activity on longer distance routes can contribute to making the population fitter and healthier; thereby, providing significant savings in health service budgets and boosting national productivity. Also, day and tourist visits will generate economic benefits and employment – often in more remote rural areas and outwith the main tourist season.
- 7.7.3 Potential sources of funding for longer distance route programmes are outlined in Table 7.3. This table is illustrative of funding sources, not a comprehensive listing.
- 7.7.4 The attraction of many longer distance routes are the opportunities these provide to explore and enjoy less populated and often more remote countryside and coasts. However, access authorities and other route management organisations in such areas are often those least able to support the creation, up-grading and maintenance of such routes (e.g. due to relatively small council tax base). Some mechanism is required, therefore, to encourage route management organisations in such circumstances to invest in routes and it is suggested that that consideration should be given to establishing a challenge fund, or similar mechanism.
- 7.7.5 ***Recommendation 29. The Scottish Government should be encouraged to establish a Challenge Fund, or similar mechanism, with perhaps a 5-year lifespan, to encourage access authorities and other organisations to work in partnership to achieve the priority recommendations in this report, including the further development of a Scottish Coastal Way.***

### *Community, voluntary and business support for longer distance routes*

- 7.7.6 As illustrated throughout this report, many community, voluntary and other groups and individuals are actively involved in, for example, -
- longer distance route planning and development
  - signing, maintaining and monitoring the condition of routes
  - assisting visitors, as voluntary rangers, visitor centre assistants, etc.

Such involvement can –

- create a sense of ‘ownership’ and care for the route
- increase personal motivation, community integration and practical skills
- harness volunteers’ skills and expertise – e.g. providing guided walks.

There is scope for greater involvement of community and other groups in the enhancement, management and marketing of longer distance routes – especially, where there are no current arrangements for such involvement.

Table 7.3 Potential funding for longer distance route programmes

Potential Funding Programme	Funding/Managing Body	Project Elements (examples)
<b>Local Authority Funding</b>	Local Authorities (+ regional transport partnerships)	<b>Single Outcome Agreement</b> funding for core paths, cycleways, countryside access, etc. and programmes to promote health, tourism, etc..
<b>Scottish Rural Development Programme</b>	Scottish Government, Rural Payments & Inspections Directorate  SGRPID, SNH, FCS  Scottish Government/ LEADER LAG  Scottish Government	<b>Rural Development Contracts Land Managers' Options</b> – single farm payments scheme for public benefits, including developing, improving, signing and managing paths and other routes  <b>Rural Priorities Scheme</b> – funds for land managers, community groups and not-for-profit bodies to create multi-use access, etc. <b>LEADER</b> – grants for small community-led, innovative or pilot rural development schemes <b>Rural Development Small Award Fund</b> - grants for rural community projects – especially community capacity building, etc..
<b>SNH Grants</b>	Scottish Natural Heritage	<b>Grants for Routes and Paths</b> – grants to communities, land managers and others to create, promote and monitor paths  Also, SNH may grant aid community-led access, natural heritage, interpretation and related projects.
<b>sportscotland Sports Facilities Fund</b>	sportscotland	<b>Sports Facilities Fund</b> – the Community Facilities strand may fund provision or up-grading of facilities to increase sports participation. Demonstration projects funding supports innovative projects to encourage participation in sport.
<b>VisitScotland Growth Fund</b>	VisitScotland	<b>Growth Fund</b> - grants enable national, regional and local tourist groups to reach new markets and increase visits. Includes funding for market research, campaigns, websites and promotional materials. 50% grants; £3,125 -£65,000 over 12 month period.
<b>Lottery Funds</b>	Big Lottery Fund  Big Lottery and sportscotland	<b>2014 Community Grants</b> - £300-£1k for community projects to promote participation and volunteering in sport and physical activity <b>Awards for All Scotland</b> - £500-£10k for local groups, community councils and individuals to promote active lifestyles, sport & heritage
<b>European Structural Fund Programmes for Lowlands &amp; Uplands Scotland 2007-2013</b>	EU/ESEF Ltd.	<b>ERDF (2007-2013) Priority 4 : Strengthening Rural Industries and Diversification</b> – possible funding for marketing and developing walking, cycling other activity tourism enterprises
<b>European Fisheries Fund</b>	Scottish Government Marine Directorate	Funding for projects to create new economic activities (e.g. activity tourism projects) in areas where fishing is in decline. Funding is to local groups (e.g. fisheries action groups) with development plans.
<b>Cycling, Walking and Safer Streets Projects</b>	Scottish Government/ Local Authorities	Ring-fenced capital funding, through Single Outcome Agreements, towards cycling, walking, traffic calming and related projects
<b>National Cycle Network &amp; associated projects</b>	Scottish Government/ Sustrans	Government funding, via Sustrans, for developing the National Cycle Network and related projects (e.g. regional routes, link routes)
<b>Climate Challenge Fund</b>	Scottish Government/ Keep Scotland Beautiful	No minimum/maximum £1m for community-based projects to reduce carbon emissions, incl. promoting walking and cycling
<b>Coalfield Regeneration Fund</b>	The Coalfield Regeneration Trust	£10k-£100k grants to voluntary and community organisations and statutory bodies (£30k max.) for improving health and well-being, encouraging active lifestyles, etc.
<b>Landfill Communities Fund</b>	Entrust/registered environmental bodies	<b>Landfill tax credits</b> - funding for community-based environmental projects in proximity to landfill operations
<b>Commercial and Charitable Support</b>	Companies, charities (e.g. Tubney Charitable Trust)	Sponsorship or grants for community-based projects
<b>Developer Contribution</b>	Developer/Local Planning Authorities	Negotiated financial or 'in kind' contributions (e.g. pathworks), as part of a planning agreement, or similar mechanism

Note: This table is indicative of potential funding sources, not comprehensive

7.7.7 Many businesses benefit from longer distance routes – e.g. walking and cycling holiday providers, transport operators and accommodation providers. There may be scope to seek financial support or income from such businesses, through voluntary contributions, charges for advertising on websites or in publications, etc..

7.7.8 ***Recommendation 30. Longer distance route managing organisations should review and enhance current partnership arrangements, to assess the potential to increase the involvement of, and support from, user and community groups, businesses, and other interests.***

## **7.8 Action programme**

7.8.1 The action programme in Table 7.4 summarises the actions recommended in sections 5, 6 and 7 of this report, which are intended to strengthen, enhance and promote Scotland's network of longer distance routes. The action programme outlines priorities, timescales and indicative scales of costs for each recommendation and suggests organisations which may be best placed to progress these.

7.8.2 The action programme is presented as a consultative programme to enable further discussions with access authorities, other longer distance route management organisations and wider stakeholders (e.g. principal access and user groups). While it identifies organisations with potential implementation roles, these are indicative and discussions and negotiations will be required to secure these organisations' commitments. The proposed Longer Distance Routes Forum, and any working groups the Forum may setup, can play lead roles in progressing many of the recommended actions.

7.8.3 The programme is presented as a 'menu', to enable specific recommendations to be implemented when resources are available. Progress will be dependent on, for example, -

- feasibility studies, design plans, approvals of business cases, etc.
- legal procedures, regulatory consents and negotiations and consents of landowners
- funding availability
- staff time and expertise to progress specific initiatives
- support from landowners, communities, user groups and individual volunteers.

Table 7.4 Longer distance route network: action programme

Recommendation	Priority 1: high - 3: low	Timescale				Scale of Costs £: <£50k; ££:£50- 100k; £££:£100+k	Lead/Implementation Responsibilities <sup>1</sup> aa: access authorities rm: other route managing bodies
		Years 1-3	Years 4-6	Years 7-10	Year 10+		
<b>Strategic Directions (section 5)</b>							
1. Collaborative route planning, management and marketing	1					SNH, aa, rm	
2. Network approach to path planning;	1					SNH, aa, rm	
3. Core path plans to include a strategic routes plan	1					SNH, aa, rm	
4. Consult and agree Vision and strategic objectives	1					SNH, aa, rm, other stakeholders	
5. Consult and agree target market sectors	1					SNH, aa, rm, other stakeholders	
<b>Strengthening and Enhancing the Longer Distance Route Network (section 6)</b>							
6. Review + action plans to extend range of users on routes	1				£-£££ / route	SNH, aa, rm	
7. Review cross-/around-Scotland longer distance routes + action programme to strengthen network and fill key gaps	1				£££ / route	SNH, aa, rm	
8. Assess feasibility/develop coast-to-coast cycle route(s)	1				£££ / route	SNH, Sustrans, sportscotland, Scottish Mountain Bike Consortium or Paths for All cycling group	
9. Longer distance circular trails pilot project; Develop further circular trails if pilot successful	1				££-£££ / trail	SNH, aa, rm, tourism organisations	
	2				££-£££ / trail		
10. Develop Scottish Coastal Way	2				£££	SNH, aa, rm	
11. Coastal Path priorities: a. upgrade existing coastal paths b. fill gaps - especially Clyde & North Sea coasts c. connect local paths on other coasts d. enhance themeing and interpretation e. promote inter-island walking/cycling trips	1				£- £££ / route	aa, rm	
	1				£££ / coast	aa, rm	
	2				£-£££ / route	aa, rm	
	2				£-££ / route	aa, rm	
	2				£ / route	aa, rm, tourism organisations	
12. Assess feasibility/develop Great Scottish Ride (riding/MTB)	1				£££	SNH, aa, rm, sportscotland, riding/MTB interests	
13. Assess feasibility/develop - Heart of Scotland Circular Ride - Moray Country & Coast Circular Ride	1				£££	aa, rm, sportscotland, riding/MTB interests	
	2				££-£££	aa, rm, sportscotland, riding/MTB interests	
14. Develop Great Glen Canoe Trail and assess feasibility, develop and monitor canoe trails on – Forth-Clyde/Union Canals, River Tweed, Loch Lomond	1				£-££ / trail	BW and Great Glen Ways Project Partners BW, SCA, water user interests	
15. Strengthen themeing and interpretation of routes	2				£ / route	aa, rm	
16. St. Andrews-Iona Pilgrims Way not to be supported in short-/medium-terms; review in longer term	3					aa, rm	
17. Assess feasibility/develop - St. Andrew's Way/Cycleway - Queens Highway	2				££ - £££	SNH, aa, rm, Historic Scotland, church interests	
	2				££ - £££	SNH, aa, rm, Historic Scotland	
18. 'Greening' of route corridors	1				£ / route	aa, rm, countryside/greenspace trusts, CSGN	
19. Promote use of public transport services by route users	1				£ / route	aa, rm, transport operators	

Notes: <sup>1</sup> Landowning/management interests should be consulted or included as partners in all projects involving private or other lands or waters.

Table 7.4 Longer distance route network: action programme (continued)

Recommendation	Priority 1: high; 3: low	Timescale				Scale of Costs £: <£50k; ££:£50- 100k; £££:£100+k	Lead/Implementation Responsibilities <sup>1</sup> aa: access authorities rm: other route managing bodies
		Years 1-3	Years 4-6	Years 7-10	Year 10+		
<b>Framework for Collaboration on Longer Distance Routes (section 7)</b>							
20. Brand development and joint marketing of network	1					£ - ££ <sup>2</sup>	SNH, aa, rm, VisitScotland
21. Collective website for route network	1					£ <sup>2</sup>	SNH, aa, rm, VisitScotland
22. Each route to have own website	1					£ <sup>2</sup>	aa, rm
23. National long distance routes/paths and routes database	1/2					£ <sup>2</sup>	SNH, aa, rm, Scotways
24. Minimum standards and quality assurance scheme	1					£ <sup>2</sup>	SNH, aa, rm
25. Priority for investment to bring routes up to minimum standards and for marketing quality assured routes	1					2	Recommendation refers to funding of other programmes
26. Long Distance Routes Forum as lead group for network	1					2	SNH, aa, rm, other access/user interests
27. Partnership-based Management Group for each route	1					2	aa, rm, other access/user interests
28. Identify a Longer Distance Routes Coordinator	1					2	SNH
29. Longer distance routes Challenge Fund; esp. Coastal Way	1					£££	Scottish Government
30. Encourage greater involvement of/support from interest groups, communities, businesses, etc.	1					2	SNH, aa, rm

Note: <sup>2</sup> In addition to capital costs, these recommendations will have revenue cost implications



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- Additional information on longer distance routes and other routes was drawn from a wide range of publications and websites.



## Appendix A. Consultees

The consultant acknowledges, with gratitude, the information and assistance provided by the organisations and individuals listed below.

### Local/National Park Authorities

Aberdeenshire Council	A. Fullwood, L. Mathieson, C. Stewart
Angus Council	P. Clark
Argyll & Bute Council	J. Gritten
Cairngorms NPA	A. Streeter-Smith, R. Grant
City of Edinburgh Council	R. McAllister
Clackmannanshire Council	M. Dean
Dumfries & Galloway Council	S. Fieldhouse
Dundee City Council	L. Campbell
East Ayrshire Council	A. Freel, P. Coldwell
East Dunbartonshire Council	C. Douglas
East Lothian Council	N. Morgan
East Renfrewshire	J. Williamson
Falkirk Council	A. Duncan
Fife Council	A. Irvine
Glasgow Council	S. Hilder
Highland Council	L. Dodd, G. Duff, G. Robson
Inverclyde Council	R. Shipley
Loch Lomond & The Trossachs NPA	G. Forrester, B. Jones
Midlothian Council	J. Park
Moray Council	I. Douglas
North Ayrshire Council	L. Kirk
North Lanarkshire Council	H. Oakes
Orkney Islands Council	C. Skene
Perth & Kinross Council	F. Berry, D. Stubbs
Renfrewshire Council	K. Cuthbert
Scottish Borders Council	N. Mackay
Shetland Islands Council	S. Johnson
South Ayrshire Council	N. Feggans
South Lanarkshire Council	A. Bannister, S. Pilpel
Stirling Council	J. Padmore, P. Stoddard
West Dunbartonshire Council	D. Petrie
Western Isles Authority	R. Evans
West Lothian Council	D. Oldham

### Other Organisations

Activity Scotland	D. Breckenridge
British Horse Society Scotland	H. Mauchlin, V. Wood-Gee
British Waterways	A. Andrews
Central Scotland Green Network	G. Barrie
Consultant	R. Smith
Cyclists Touring Club	P. Hawkins
Edinburgh & Lothians Greenspace Trust	C. Cummings
Forestry Commission Scotland	F. Murray
Glasgow & Clyde Valley Green Network	M. Hislop, A. Corbett
Historic Scotland	P. Yeoman
IMBA	K. Bartlett

*(continued overleaf)*

Natural England – Pennine Way  
Nortrail  
Paths for All Partnership  
Perth & Kinross Countryside Trust  
Ramblers Association Scotland  
Scottish Canoe Association  
Scottish Forest Alliance  
Scotways  
SNH  
sportscotland  
Sustrans  
VisitScotland

S. Westwood  
A. Garvie  
R. Gibb  
A. Barrie, P. McLennan  
H. Todd  
E. Palmer, M. Dales  
E. Shortall  
J. Lewis, J. Mackay, N. Ramsay  
G. Atkins, C. Fyfe, R. McCraw, A. Tooth,  
C. Gerrard  
K. Taylor  
S. Duncan

## Appendix B. Assessments of Potential Strategic Cross-Country Routes

Section 6.3 of the main report identifies and discusses potential strategic cross-country longer distance routes and recommends a potential timescale for developing each route. The report presents the assessments and recommendations in a summary table (Table 6.2). This summary is based on assessment tables prepared for each route corridor, which appeared from the audit and mapped information to present opportunities to connect longer distance and link routes and, thereby, provide the basis of a strategic cross-country route.

Missing links in each potential route were identified and the recommended priorities took account of the extent of new path sections, and associated expenditures, which may be required to fill gaps in, and between, existing routes (Table 6.3). Local paths may be available to fill some strategic gaps, but assessments of the availability of core paths and other local routes were outwith the scope of this strategic review.

The following potential strategic cross-Scotland routes are assessed in the tables below –

- Border or East Coast to Ayrshire
- Fife to Glasgow, The Clyde or Loch Lomond
- Fife to the Trossachs and West Highlands
- Fife or Perth to West Highlands
- Aberdeenshire to Argyll
- Aberdeenshire to Inverness and the Moray Firth
- Border/Solway Firth to Glasgow
- Border/Solway Firth to Edinburgh and Central Scotland
- Border/Cheviots to Edinburgh and East of Scotland.

The potential for an Edinburgh/Stirling to Inverness route (by Central Perthshire) was considered, also, but the current lack of longer distance routes and link routes resulted in this option being omitted from further consideration. Potential routes around the coast and across the Central Belt are outlined in Tables 6.2 and 6.4.

<b>East-West/Coast-Coast Route: BORDER OR EAST COAST TO AYRSHIRE</b>		
Key Sections of Route: Southern Upland Way and/or South of Scotland Countryside Trails, John Buchan Way, <i>missing link</i> , River Ayr Way		
Assessment factor	commentary	assessment
Availability of routes	The majority of this route is available, with the exception of an extensive gap between Biggar and Glenbuck on the River Ayr Way.	++
Contribution to wider route network (e.g. linkages)	Route would provide a valuable addition to the routes network in Southern Scotland and a more direct cross-country route than the Southern Upland Way. A link from the John Buchan Way to the River Ayr Way could connect to the Clyde Walkway and fill one of the major gaps in the network.	+++
Main population centres which may benefit	Borders towns, Biggar and Ayr, with potential link to Lanark	++
Access from public transport networks	Good public transport services in Scottish Borders and Ayrshire, but not in more remote central part of route.	++
Active travel opportunities	Opportunities for commuting and other trips in the Borders and River Ayr corridor	++
Visitor appeal	Scenically attractive landscapes. Interesting Borders Towns with attractions (e.g. Abbeys, Houses). Some Ayrshire sections of less appeal.	++
Market potential	Potential for growth in day and multi-day use of route. Moderate potential for all-way walking or riding, but could provide a good all-way cycle route.	++
Visitor services and potential expenditures	Good visitor services over much of route, but with gap west of Biggar. Potential for visitor spend greatest in Borders and vicinity of Ayr.	++
Potential scale of costs	Completing section of route between Biggar and Glenbuck could be costly.	~~
<b>Overall Assessment</b>	Route would provider good cross-country link, passing through some attractive countryside and linking to north-south strategic routes. Completing missing section is likely to require substantial investment	<b>medium-term potential</b>

Key: Significant link routes in *italics*. Assessment: ~ negative + positive

<b>East-West/Coast-Coast Route: FIFE TO GLASGOW, THE CLYDE OR LOCH LOMOND</b>		
Key Sections of Route: Fife Coastal Path (or local paths through Central Fife), Round the Forth Cycle Route, proposed Kings Highway, West Highland Way,		
Assessment factor	commentary	assessment
Availability of routes	For Fife Coastal Path option, longer distance and link paths are available except for proposed Kings Highway (parts available). Audit shows no longer distance paths and few significant link paths in Central Fife	++
Contribution to wider route network (e.g. linkages)	Links to Central Belt routes, Rob Roy Way, West Highland Way, etc. Links by West Highland Way to West Highlands, Inverness, etc.	+++
Main population centres which may benefit	Kirkcaldy, Dunfermline, Alloa, Stirling, Greater Glasgow (North)	+++
Active travel opportunities	Sections already used for active travel. Route links Carse to Stirling.	++
Access from public transport networks	Good public transport linkages to start/finish and many intermediate points	+++
Visitor appeal	Ecclesiastical and historical interest - St. Andrews, Fife Coast, Dunfermline, Stirling, etc.. Central Fife option, including Falkland and Loch Leven would contribute significantly to historic appeal.	+++
Market potential	Potential for strong day visit and tourism, walking and cycling growth	+++
Visitor services and potential expenditures	Services along Fife Coast, Stirling, Carse of Stirling, Drymen and Firth of Clyde settlements. Good spending potential.	+++
Potential scale of costs	Main costs associated with proposed Kings Highway, but sections exist. Upgrading and linking local paths for Central Fife option could be costly	~
<b>Overall Assessment</b>	Potentially valuable East-West multi-use route with high user/visitor appeal. Potential to brand east section as <i>Queens Highway</i> to meet <i>Kings Highway</i> at Stirling. Capital costs could provide good value for money	<b>short-/medium-term priority</b>

Key: Significant link routes in *italics*. Assessment: ~ negative + positive

<b>East-West/Coast-Coast Route: FIFE TO THE TROSSACHS AND WEST HIGHLANDS</b>		
Key Sections of Route: Fife Coastal Path (or local paths in Central Fife), Round the Forth Cycle Route, proposed Stirling-Callander Cycle Route + a. Rob Roy Way and proposed <i>Killin-Tyndrum</i> and <i>Tyndrum-Oban</i> paths; or b. proposed <i>Callander-Loch Katrine path</i> , <i>Stronachlachar-Inversnaid link</i> , <i>West Highland Way</i> and proposed <i>Tyndrum-Oban Path</i>		
Assessment factor	commentary	assessment
Availability of routes	Fife to Stirling on existing paths; thereafter mix of longer distance routes, link paths and extensive sections of proposed routes. No longer distance paths and few major link paths in Central Fife	~~
Contribution to wider route network (e.g. linkages)	Route would provide links to Central Belt routes, Rob Roy Way, West Highland Way, etc.	+++
Main population centres which may benefit	Kirkcaldy, Dunfermline, Alloa, Stirling and Oban	++
Active travel opportunities	Southern sections used for active travel. Little value beyond Callander	+
Access from public transport networks	Good public transport links to start/finish and many intermediate points	+++
Visitor appeal	Ecclesiastical and historical attractions - St. Andrews, Fife Coast, Dunfermline, Stirling, etc.. Attractive scenery and views – especially Trossachs and West Highlands.	+++
Market potential	Good potential for day visit and tourism, walking and cycling growth	+++
Visitor services and potential expenditures	Services along Fife Coast, Stirling, Callander, Tyndrum, Dalmally, Oban, etc.. Good spending potential.	+++
Potential scale of costs	High costs - especially providing extensive new routes in west. Central Fife option is likely to impose significant additional costs.	~~~
<b>Overall Assessment</b>	Potentially valuable East-West multi-use route with high user/visitor appeal. Upgrading sections to multi-use and western link from Tyndrum to Oban will require high capital investment. Merits further investigation.	<b>long-term potential</b>

Key: Significant link routes in *italics*. Assessment: ~ negative + positive



<b>East-West/Coast-Coast Route: FIFE OR PERTH TO WEST HIGHLANDS</b>		
Key Sections of Route: Fife Coastal Path (+ proposed Tay Trail extension to Perth), west of Perth – a. local paths, where available in corridor of 'The Scottish Coast to Coast' (guidebook route), Rob Roy Way and proposed <i>Killin-Tyndrum</i> and <i>Tyndrum-Oban</i> routes; or b. <i>Old Route (Harrietfield-Amulree)</i> , Rob Roy Way and proposed routes as a.		
Assessment factor	commentary	assessment
Availability of routes	Very few sections of routes are currently available as longer distance or readily identifiable link routes.	~~~
Contribution to wider route network (e.g. linkages)	Connections to Rob Roy Way and West Highland Way, but few other routes. Would provide important new routes to/from Perth.	++
Main population centres which may benefit	Perth + links to/from Dundee	+
Access from public transport networks	Perth, Crianlarich, Tyndrum and sections further west, including Oban, have good public transport links; not so good from Perth to A85	++
Active travel opportunities	Contribution to active travel around Perth, but little impacts elsewhere	+
Visitor appeal	Historical and some ecclesiastical interests (e.g. Balmerino, Perth, link to Scone). Attractive scenery, especially L. Tay and Central/West Highlands.	+++
Market potential	Significant potential for day visit, tourism, walking and cycling growth	+++
Visitor services and potential expenditures	Services at Perth, Tyndrum and Oban and in villages. Limited spending potential throughout much of route	++
Potential scale of costs	High costs of extensive new/up-graded routes west of Perth and cost of Newburgh to Perth link (part of proposed Tay Trail)	~~~
<b>Overall Assessment</b>	Route would link Perth to national longer distance routes network. Extent of missing sections and high costs rule out route as priority for investment in short- to medium-terms.	<b>long-term potential</b>

Key: Significant link routes in *italics*. Assessment: ~ negative + positive

<b>East-West/Coast-Coast Route: ABERDEENSHIRE TO ARGYLL</b>		
Key Sections of Route: Deeside Way, <i>missing link</i> , CATERAN Trail, Enochdhu/Kirkmichael-Pitlochry, Rob Roy Way, proposed Killin-Tyndrum link and Tyndrum-Oban routes		
Assessment factor	commentary	assessment
Availability of routes	Several sections are available/being developed (e.g. Kirkmichael-Pitlochry) No direct link from Deeside Way to CATERAN Trail, other than A93 corridor, or Jock's Road (very exposed) and lengthy indirect minor roads. Would require development of Killin-Tyndrum and Tyndrum-Oban routes	~~
Contribution to wider route network (e.g. linkages)	This route would provide useful route from Aberdeen to the Central Highlands and rest of Scotland	++
Main population centres which may benefit	Aberdeen, Deeside Towns, Pitlochry, Oban	++
Access from public transport networks	Aberdeen, Deeside, Pitlochry and Crianlarich westwards have good public transport links; not good from Braemar to Pitlochry or Pitlochry to Killin	+
Active travel opportunities	Deeside Way already provide for active travel. Little additional value	+
Visitor appeal	Challenging cross-country route with scenic and cultural appeal of Royal Deeside, Highland Perthshire, etc..	++
Market appeal	Limited potential growth of walking market; potentially popular cycle route	++
Visitor services and potential expenditures	Services spaced out throughout Deeside, Pitlochry, Highland Perthshire and Killin to Oban sections. Moderate expenditures likely	++
Potential scale of development costs	High costs of providing cycle route or maintaining high level route from Deeside to Highland Perthshire and new Tyndrum to Oban route	~~~
<b>Overall Assessment</b>	Potentially popular cycle route; lower market potential for longer distance walking. Requires major investment in extensive new sections of route	<b>long-term potential</b>

Key: Significant link routes in *italics*. Assessment: ~ negative + positive

<b>East-West/Coast-Coast Route: ABERDEENSHIRE TO INVERNESS AND MORAY FIRTH</b>		
Key Sections of Route:	River Don Path, <i>missing link</i> , Gordon Way + proposed extensions to Inverurie and Huntly, <i>missing link (or future Strathbogie and Cabrach Way)</i> , Speyside Way +/- Isla Way, Moray Coast Trail, <i>missing link</i> to Inverness	
Assessment factor	commentary	assessment
Availability of routes	Extensive missing links. Local paths and forest/farm tracks may be available and there are proposals to fill some gaps.	~~
Contribution to wider route network (e.g. linkages)	This route would provide useful route from Aberdeen to Speyside, Inverness and the Highlands	++
Main population centres which may benefit	Aberdeen, Donside, Speyside and Moray Firth Towns, Inverness	+++
Access from public transport networks	Good public transport links in more populated areas – especially in Aberdeenshire, Speyside and Moray Coast	++
Active travel opportunities	Route connects many towns and links to Aberdeen and Inverness offering good potential for promoting active travel	+++
Visitor appeal	Attractive and varied countryside over much of route with added interest of whisky industry and Moray Firth coast.	+++
Market appeal	Potentially high day, multi-day and all-way use by walkers and cyclists. Sections attractive to horse riders, with some existing provision in Moray.	++
Visitor services and potential expenditures	Good access to services along much of route and opportunities for visitor expenditures in rural towns, etc.	+++
Potential scale of development costs	High costs of completing missing sections of route especially from Huntly to Speyside and from end of Moray Coast Trail to Inverness	~~~
<b>Overall Assessment</b>	Potentially attractive and valuable link from Aberdeenshire to Speyside, Moray Firth and Inverness. Requires major investment to fill extensive gaps	<b>long-term potential</b>

Key: Significant link routes in *italics*. Assessment: ~ negative + positive

<b>South-North Route: BORDER/SOLWAY FIRTH TO GLASGOW</b>		
Key Sections of Route:	<i>missing link</i> : Border-Annandale Way, Annandale Way, Southern Upland Way, then options: a. Coalfield Way, Weavers Way, <i>missing link</i> : Eaglesham to Glasgow b. Coalfield Way, River Ayr Way, <i>Douglas-Crossford</i> , <i>missing section</i> , Clyde Walkway c. <i>Wanlockhead-Elvanfoot</i> , <i>missing link</i> : Elvanfoot-Falls of Clyde, Clyde Walkway	
Assessment factor	commentary	assessment
Availability of routes	Missing link to Annandale Way; then - a. routes available to Eaglesham, then local paths; b. missing link between Crossford and Clyde Walkway c. missing link between Elvanfoot and Clyde Walkway	a. +++ b/c. ~
Contribution to wider route network (e.g. linkages)	Potential major South-North spinal route for walkers and cyclists linking North West Coastal Trail and Cumbria Way (England) to Scottish network, Central Belt routes, West Highland Way/Great Glen Way route to Highlands and to Southern Upland Way, Ayrshire, Clyde Coast and Borders routes	all: +++
Main population centres which may benefit	Annan, Dumfries, Lockerbie, Sanquhar + a. E. Kilbride, Irvine Valley Towns, Glasgow; b. & c. Lanark, Motherwell, Hamilton, Clyde Valley Towns	a. +++ b/c. +++
Access from public transport networks	Good east-west travel links in South and West, but not so useful as route is north-south. Good travel links from Eaglesham or Lanark to Glasgow	a. + b/c. ++
Active travel opportunities	Option a. would encourage limited new active travel trips; Option b. would provide opportunities in Clyde Valley if Clyde Walkway becomes multi-use	a. + b/c. ++
Visitor appeal	Southern sections are attractive, but Coalfield Cycle Route and Weavers Way have less appeal. Clyde Valley offers Falls of Clyde, New Lanark, etc	a. + b/c. +++
Market potential	Considerable market potential as long distance walking/cycling route linking English trails to Central Belt and Highlands. Northern sections: mainly local use of sections of a.; more local and visitor use of b/c.	a. ++ b/c. +++
Visitor services and potential expenditures	Limited attractive services and spending opportunities on option a.; more opportunities on Clyde Walkway route	a. ++ b/c. +++
Potential scale of costs	Route a. is largely available, so limited costs. Much of b. and c. available, but significant costs of completing links to Clyde Walkway	a. ++ b/c. ~~
<b>Overall Assessment</b>	Potentially very valuable part of national longer distance route network. Much of option a. available, but potentially less attractive than Clyde Valley alternatives. Given importance of routes, merit in providing both routes and giving users choice. Choice of b. or c. requires feasibility study	<b>a. short-term b/c. medium-term priority</b>

Key: Significant link routes in *italics*. Assessment: ~ negative + positive

<b>South-North Route: BORDER/SOLWAY FIRTH TO EDINBURGH AND CENTRAL SCOTLAND</b>		
Key Sections of Route:	<i>missing link</i> : Border-Annandale Way, Annandale Way, then: a. Southern Upland Way, S. of Scotland Countryside Trails, <i>Pentland Hills paths</i> , Clyde-Forth Route; b. Southern Upland Way, South of Scotland Countryside Trails, proposed Peebles to Roslin route, Penicuik-Musselburgh/Innocent Railway Path; or c. Wanlockhead-Elvanfoot, <i>missing link</i> , S. of Scotland Countryside Trails, then b. or c.	
Assessment factor	commentary	assessment
Availability of routes	Options a.: all routes available; b.: requires proposed Peebles-Roslin route, c.: requires Elvanfoot-Biggar link (see option c. for Borders-Glasgow route)	a. +++ b. ++ c. ++
Contribution to wider route network (e.g. linkages)	Potentially valuable links from Border/South-West Scotland to Scottish Borders, Edinburgh, East and Central Scotland routes.	+++
Main population centres which may benefit	Annan, Dumfries, Lockerbie, Moffat, Peebles, Edinburgh + Esk Valley Towns (options b. & c.)	+++
Access from public transport networks	Good east-west travel links in South, but not so useful as route is north-south. Good travel links from Moffat and Borders Towns to Edinburgh	a,b. ++ c. +
Active travel opportunities	Limited value except in the Dumfries, Peebles, Midlothian and Edinburgh areas, but existing opportunities.	+
Visitor appeal	Sections of attractive moorland, hill and farmland landscapes and attractive towns (e.g. Moffat, Peebles). Long stretch Southern Upland Way (+/- S. of Scotland Countryside Trails) east of Moffat with few services and exposed	++
Market potential	Potential for local, day visitor and tourist walking and cycling on sections, limited all-Way travel, other than potentially cycling	++
Visitor services and potential expenditures	Quality visitor services and attractions in Moffat, Borders Towns, etc. with significant spending opportunities	+++
Potential scale of costs	Some up-grading of 'softer' paths required to sustain multi-use but most paths in place; other than potential Peebles-Roslin link (option b.) and potentially expensive Elvanfoot to Biggar section (option c)	a, b. + c. ~~~
<b>Overall Assessment</b>	Long distance route has limitations, but provides important connections and likely to attract multi-/day visitors. Gaps in b. and c. and at start	<b>a. medium-term; b,c. longer-term potential</b>

Key: Significant link routes in *italics*. Assessment: ~ negative + positive

<b>South-North Route: BORDER/CHEVIOTS TO EDINBURGH AND EAST OF SCOTLAND</b>		
Key Sections of Route:	a. from Kielder: South of Scotland Countryside Trails, Pentland Hills paths, Clyde-Forth Route b. from Pennine Way: SoS Countryside Trails or St. Cuthbert's Way, Borders Abbeys Way, SoS Countryside Trails, then i. Pentland Hills (as a.), or ii. proposed Peebles-Roslin route, Penicuik-Musselburgh/Innocent Railway Path	
Assessment factor	commentary	assessment
Availability of routes	Existing routes available to provide options from Kielder Forest Park or Pennine Way/Cheviot. Link by the Penicuik-Musselburgh Cycleway requires completion of the proposed Peebles to Roslin route	+++
Contribution to wider route network (e.g. linkages)	Proposed route provides links to Borders, East Coast (St Cuthbert's Way, Southern Upland Way), West Coast (Southern Upland Way) and Central Scotland longer distance routes (from Edinburgh, or by Pentlands routes)	+++
Main population centres which may benefit	Borders Towns, Peebles, Esk Valley Towns (Penicuik-Musselburgh option)	+++
Access from public transport networks	Towns are well-served by local public transport services and service to Edinburgh	+++
Active travel opportunities	Existing active travel opportunities on these routes, but enhanced links into Edinburgh from Peebles (option B)	++
Visitor appeal	Attractive landscapes and interesting Borders Towns (e.g. Abbeys, Houses)	+++
Market potential	Potential for significant growth in walking, cycling and riding markets	+++
Visitor services and potential expenditures	High quality visitor services and attractions in Borders Towns, Peebles, etc. with significant spending opportunities	+++
Potential scale of costs	Some up-grading of 'softer' paths required to sustain multi-use but most paths in place; other than potential Peebles-Roslin link	~
<b>Overall Assessment</b>	Both routes offer attractive opportunities for market growth and would maximise potential of existing routes for day/multi-day visits and longer distance walking, cycling and riding. Limited development costs.	<b>a./bi. short-term; bii. medium-term priority</b>

Key: Significant link routes in *italics*. Assessment: ~ negative + positive



## **Appendix C. Criteria for Successful Longer Distance Routes**

The following criteria are suggested as contributing to the visitor appeal, success and sustainable design and management of longer distance routes –

### **a. Safety**

- routes should minimise conflicts with traffic and be off-road, where feasible
- routes should avoid/minimise potential conflicts with natural hazards (e.g. unstable cliff edges, crossings of rivers prone to spate)
- routes on water should avoid weirs, other hazards and Grade 3 waters and above
- information should promote safety and provide pre-trip and on-site advance warnings of potential hazards (e.g. hazardous road crossings, rapids on water trails)

### **b. Coherence and clear definition**

- routes should be continuous, connect start/end points and other key locations (e.g. settlements with visitor services, attractions) and avoid unnecessary deviations
- spurs may provide access to attractions, services or settlements
- routes should be clearly identifiable on the ground

### **c. Challenging, but achievable**

- routes should provide a sense of challenge to the types of user expected to use them
- sections between key locations (e.g. villages with services) should be achievable in a days journey. For example, sections of longer distance walking or multi-use routes used by families or less experienced users may be 16-25 kms (10-15 miles), and for more experienced walkers and others may be 25-32 kms (15-20 miles). Cyclists or horse riders may cover two, or more, sections of such routes in a day

### **d. Attractive and varied scenery and interests**

- routes should offer attractive and varied scenery and good views
- opportunities should be taken to 'showcase' and interpret the natural landscape, wildlife, cultural heritage and aspects such as local crafts and produce
- unique themes (e.g. historical associations) can contribute to the user experience and strengthen the marketing of the route
- communities, accommodation providers, walk leaders and others can help to communicate local history and culture to visitors

### **e. Access to the route**

- start/end points and key intermediate locations should be accessible by public transport
- car parks should be available at key access/egress points and provide trailer parking on cycle, horse and water routes

### **f. Accessibility**

- route design, construction, facilities and information should be accessible and meet DDA requirements, insofar as practical considerations and budgets permit
- routes should be free of barriers and obstacles, insofar as practical – for example, with user-friendly gates, rather than stiles, and avoiding long portages on water routes
- gates and access controls (e.g. motorcycle barriers) should not restrict access by those with equipment – such as cyclists with panniers, or on tandems, canoeists seeking access to water, and car park access by vehicles with canoe or cycle racks

**g. Surfaces which are fit for purpose**

- surfacing materials should match the needs of predominant types of users – for example, ‘hard’ surfaces for cyclists and disabled users, and ‘softer’ surfaces for long distance walkers and riders, taking account of landscape, maintenance and budgetary issues
- consideration may be given to segregating users on braided walking/cycling and riding routes
- drainage will be a key consideration in route design to avoid erosion and waterlogging

**h. Comfort and convenience**

- consideration should be given to users’ comfort and convenience – for example, by providing seats on routes used by less able users, and at popular viewpoints or lunch stops, and shelters on lengthy exposed routes
- cyclists and other users should be able to maintain momentum, through the avoidance of frequent stops (e.g. at road crossings) and provision of easy gradients

**i. Convenient facilities and services**

- basic amenities should be provided – including car parks, toilet arrangements (e.g. access to café toilets), changing facilities on water routes, cycle racks and horse hitching posts at popular stops and service points and basic shelters on long, exposed paths
- most users appreciate at least a minimum level of services at convenient locations. Basic campsites will satisfy some, but many may not wish to carry equipment and will seek user-friendly accommodation (including horse and rider accommodation on longer distance riding routes), eating places and pubs
- booking, guiding, bag/passenger transfer services and, where appropriate, cycle, horse or canoe hire facilities should be encouraged on popular routes

**j. Effective information, signing and waymarking**

- effective information for pre-trip planning and use on the route – usually include Internet and published information and information boards at key access points
- information should include safety, responsible access (including suitability for different types of user) and ‘leave no trace’ advice, maps with OS-type information, distances and journey times, and information on visitor services, public transport and attractions
- clear, effective signing (e.g. fingerposts with destinations, distances and user types) and waymarking to guide and reassure less experienced users
- signs and waymarking can assist land managers and prevent environmental impacts by encouraging users to keep to managed routes

**k. Effective route management**

- route condition and use should be regularly monitored and reported on
- users should be able to report problems (e.g. telephone ‘hotline’) and expect a speedy response to resolve issues
- emergency rescue arrangements should be in place – especially on more remote and high country routes and paddle-sports trails
- adequate budgets should be available for route improvements and maintenance
- volunteers can help to monitor routes and undertake basic maintenance tasks (e.g. Sustrans’ rangers, local ‘linesmen’).



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